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The RADIANT TREE

MARGUERITE WILKINSON

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"Her introduction is full of zeal, her choices often original and unusually fine." W: R. Benét

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The RADIANT TREE

A COLLECTION OF POEMS OF THE PASSION AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TAKEN FROM ALL PERIODS IN THE LITERATURE OF OUR LANGUAGE WITH AN INTRODUCTION TELLING HOW THE RADIANT TREE TAKES ROOT IN HUMAN HEARTS AND HOW IT LIFTS ITS BRANCHES INTO HEAVEN.

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The RADIANT TREE

"Eyes of the Soul, awake, awake and see
Growing within the ruby, radiant tree"
—Susan Mitchell

MARGUERITE WILKINSON

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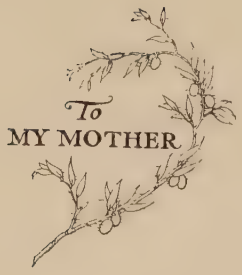
To
MY MOTHER

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The RADIANT TREE

MANY trees grew in Palestine in the days of Pilate, but one was honored above all others. That it might be glorified it was hewn down, stripped of branches, foliage, and the kindly covering of bark, and cut into rugged beams. Two of them were chosen to be built together into a cross, one reaching up and down like the love that is between God and man, and one reaching out on either side like our loves for each other.

Many mighty men lived in Palestine in the reign of Herod, but One was the mightiest of them all because through love He knew how to lay down the life that none could take from Him, and how to take it again. That He might be glorified in us He let men strip Him of His garments and flay His shoulders with the scourge and lead Him out to die. His hands, gentler than the leaves of summer, and His feet, beautiful upon the mountains because they brought glad tidings, felt in their flesh and blood the nails that pierced the sap and fibre of the tree. Then the Man and the Cross were lifted up together on the highest hill known to our race. They were glorified together, having died that they might live. The Son of Man became the Savior. The Cross became the Radiant Tree. It shines forever with the luster of His love, for when the agony was over and men separated the dead body of the Lord of Life from the body of the dead wood, He and the Cross became inseparable in human feeling and thought, and the Tree began to grow again.

Deep, deep down went the new roots through earth, air, fire, and water, through minds and hearts and souls. Up toward the zenith grew the new branches, passing through diverse civilizations, hanging their fragrance above the pinnacles of time, bearing vari-colored fruits of wisdom and loveliness and virtue to feed our insatiable hungers. Both roots and branches have been quickened for us by the Holy Breath of the Father and the Son, and all who reach up to the heavenly fruit are fed.

Nevertheless, though nearly a score of centuries have gone by since the Radiant Tree began to grow out of the death of Jesus, the gluttonous world, gorged with earthly bread and rich meats from the flesh-pots of power, pride, and prosperity, is still unnourished by the holy food. Because men and women with keen minds, quick imaginations, and much emotional energy are starving for lack of the veritable inspiration, the intellectual atmosphere of this period is sour with the miasma of decadence. Because men and women with eager hearts, strong wills, and the capacity for leadership are often misled by the fear of seeming "impractical" and "unsound" they fail to develop their highest intuitions and learn the savor of the spiritual fruit; and sometimes, becoming incredulous of mysteries of which they are called to be stewards, have little to offer the famishing souls of their kind but the dry chips and sawdust of argument and speculation. And the great mass of mankind, too blind to see the luminous crown of the Radiant Tree, too deaf to hear God's breath waving the fair branches, too lame to climb to the base of it and cling, too insensitive to feel the strong roots thrust down into the granite hardness of life,—this great mass of mankind still treads a stony path, heedless and unknowing, awaiting the coming of Christians who are indeed members of the one body, who have shared the Cross

and the Resurrection and have a spiritual experience and knowledge to offer their fellows. Loud voices and clamorous convictions are valueless. The world cries out for leaders who know "the way," who can reach the high branches of the Radiant Tree and pluck its fruit for themselves and for their comrades, leaders of whom we may take knowledge that they have been with Jesus. The world needs lean, irresistible prophets, artists whose creative power is held in exquisite equilibrium and poured out bountifully like the gushing of a sweet fountain, and powerful saints whose fiery faith can move the mountains of our sluggish piety and enflame our dull conformity with zeal.

We look for beauty and find want; we look for wisdom and find dearth; we look for holiness and find famine. Our hearts ache because of our own blindness, deafness, lameness and dullness and also because we realize the thwarted, distorted, and inexpressible longings of others. Yet if we could but take of the fruit of the Radiant Tree, we should be satisfied.

Eyes of the soul, awake, awake, and see
Growing within the ruby radiant tree.

Here is to be found the sublimation of all desires, the balm for all sorrows, the guerdon of all sacrifices, the crown of all martyrdoms. It is one of the peculiar glories of the religion of Jesus that it teaches the utilization of suffering and shows people how it can be turned into joy.

Trials by fire, by water, and by air,
Unknowing darkness of the eternal cloud
And the bright throes by which the soul is bowed
Down to the utter dust inert and spare:
All the hard strife that Jesus bent to share,

Alone, forever lonely in the crowd,
All costly pain that yet shall make Him proud
Whoever holds Him will have strength to bear.

O strong my Lord, down to Thy wounded feet
I bend my face; I keep the mighty tryst
With life and death, the future and the past,
Since every rhythm of Thy will is sweet.
By the strong Cross that I have taken and kissed,
Grant me the hidden manna, Lord, at last.

It is in the Cross of Jesus, in His Passion and Resurrection, that we learn how to suffer to good advantage, how to transmute pain into glad triumphing. And we learn it nowhere else. All other proposed cures are mere palliatives.

"Sensible" people advise us to forget our troubles in work. A broom, a spade, a ledger, they think, can cure our ills. But if our work fails to hold our thoughts by day and the nights bring recurrent bitterness, time alone can tell which will wear out first, the suffering, or the sufferer. It may be said for this method that it is better than the process of hardening by social diversion often recommended by worldly wisemen; for if we care for our own personalities as we should, we do not wish to be hardened. The truth is, in spite of all the common sense in the world, that neither gaiety nor labor, taken alone, is enough. And some of us must suffer without the relief of work or play.

Certain moderns teach the unreality of suffering and tell us that if we deny the existence of pain, it will not exist for us. This is an admirable way of dealing with many of our babyish and imaginary colics of body, mind, and heart, since they really are fictitious. But we cannot efface the memory of a deep and genuine wound by covering it with a flimsy intellectual illusion. Rosy

gauze will not hide gangrene. And although there is a sense in which physical pain is unreal, since it is only a shadow cast upon our external world, an effect of some cause that exists in the invisible consciousness, still we have to remember that for nearly everybody that external world is the most real one that they know. The shadows are the substance of experience for all who have never known the light, and the sufferings of the external world are real for most of us while we are clad in the flesh. To deny them, therefore, is to sin against verity and involve ourselves in mental confusion. Moreover, the sorrows of the mind and of the spirit are real in and of themselves.

To deny these realities is also a sign of unfaith. Faith says, "Yes, the agony is real, the cup of hemlock slays, but there are greater realities in which we may trust." Faith refuses illusion as Jesus refused the deadening "wine of mercy" made of mingled grape-must and myrrh. Faith does not go blind in a time of darkness, but waits with clear eyes open for the returning light. Faith can give us the fruit of the Radiant Tree, that greatest of all consolations, a perfect companionship in all our woes. Finding the Cross, we find that we are not alone, for if He said that when He was lifted up He would draw all men unto Him, surely the promise was given for their sakes, not for His. And if, as most people think, He Himself was utterly alone, bereft of the sense of the Father's presence when He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me," surely He bore that, even that, in order to be their helper when they are similarly bereft. But we may observe that He took upon His lips on the Cross the first words of the twenty-second psalm, that majestic lyric of lamentation. We may have in mind not only the miseries described in the first part of it, but also the serene faith of the ending:

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the governor among the nations.

All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him; and none can keep alive his own soul.

A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.

It is the sheer loneliness of suffering that doubles it for the unbeliever, or the slack believer, the feeling that "nobody cares," that we must often know dumb isolation in a vast universe. The Christian whose heart has been warmed by a personal and passionate love for Jesus can challenge that feeling. He may even become a realizing participant in that grand, all pervading consciousness in which He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of One.

People who love deeply and tenderly sometimes enter into this consciousness when, in long brooding on those they love, they get news of them by sudden intuition across thousands of acres of space. Ouspensky, speaking for moderns in his "Tertium Organum," calls it the fourth-dimensional or cosmic consciousness. Without being dogmatic we might say that the Church describes it with the phrase "the communion of saints." A poet might say, very simply, that it is a spiritual condition which gives to the struggling human soul the fragrance of far gardens not his own. Smug, prudential, theoretical followers of Jesus can hardly

know it through precise debates on ceremonies and doctrines, through banal, conventional observances. But when we are loving and humble in our agonies, when we reach out to the Radiant Tree with all the strength we have, then the Holy Ghost circles bird-like above our desolation, bringing us messages of peace from our eternal comrades and our eternal Christ.

Our sufferings are greater than they should be not only when we think of ourselves as if we were alone, but also when we think of ourselves as people who ought to be allowed to escape suffering. Our pain is augmented by every surly rebellion. We cannot afford to shake our fists at the law of the universe. They are too puny for that gesture. When we meet the tumult of the bitter waters of Marah with anger and arrogance, we must drink not only their bitterness, but also our own. It were better to face the deluge, I think, with what modern psychology might call "reversed effort," what old-fashioned piety knew as "resignation to the will of God." But it were best of all to consider how the bitter waters may be sweetened. Their force is apparently pitiless, but they may wash us clean. They may lay bare a fresh vein of gold in the bedrock so that we may find it when their work is done.

He Whose resurrection made the Cross the Radiant Tree never rebelled against suffering. He wasted no strength in that way. Neither did He bear it with an ox-like heavy stupidity. He used it to achieve His purpose. By His throes He drew us to Him. By meeting them gallantly He became invincible. And when, in the prescience that was His because He fully shared the will and consciousness of His Father, He knew that the supreme passion lay just ahead of Him, He did not tell His disciples that He was about to be abused of God. He said that He was about to be

glorified. It was true. It has been true for all who have ever really known and followed Him. They have gloried in tribulation with a luminous joy that makes unbelievers doubt the reality of their woes.

It is a strange joy and unexpected, but it is inevitable. It is like the joy of a slave winning freedom after long, hard servitude. It is like the joy of a poet shaping agony and ecstasy into everlasting forms of loveliness. It is the joy of feet marching in rhythm with the thundering law of the universe, treading down self and selfishness in austere obedience to a ringing starry music. It is Aaron's rod breaking into bloom. It is the flowering of the Radiant Tree in our souls. It is a resurrection.

It is a fruitful joy. When men and women who are weak, sick, broken, bewildered, scourged and crucified in heart and mind, can still set their wills firmly in an effort to quell the inward rebellion of the natural man, in a desire to cooperate with Heaven, then the angels cannot leave them unblessed. Then they can make the common cloth of their lives into good garments for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Then their eyes learn a glowing tenderness, their hands learn a sure way of healing, their lips learn how to pronounce benedictions.

Would you know the secret of the resurrection,
Of the light from the fire? Then, hark—
Every white shining river by which the flocks are feeding
Is an old wound bleeding in the dark.

When we have overcome the loneliness and the rebellion that increase our suffering we may be able to offer it as a sacrifice, in this way making it lovely even to ourselves. Even so the Radiant Tree that once flowered within us bears fruit. The reformer wear-

ing the tar and feathers of the mob, the mother starving herself slowly that her child may have good food, the young musician pawning his overcoat and shivering in a garret that he may give the world his symphony, these, whether they realize it or not, are lifted far above the slavery of pain. The prophet wearing that golden crown of persecution which the weak bestow upon the strong, and the saint, taking upon himself with Christ the loathed sins of the world—these may give us their compassion, but hardly need ours. And there is no ache of flesh or spirit that the Christian may not offer to Christ, if he will, with the desire that it may be used for the good of others. Perhaps it is easier to offer the ills of the body than those persistent and intense pangs that come with the development of the higher life in us. But these more difficult sacrifices can be made most fruitful. In an hour of rest a quiet shrine may be built in the inner life and in the shrine an altar may be erected, cool and firm and clean. And on that altar may be laid the bewilderments of growth, the struggle of new motives with old habits, the strife with anger. Looking toward the Radiant Tree, we may hear the triumphant *sursum corda* of Our Lord. And if we do lift up our broken hearts like empty cups, He fills them. We are healed. We are defended. And the power of His sunny love grows warmer in us and brighter that we may shine on sadder people than ourselves.

Sometimes the influx of His love is like a fiery nectar, too strong and sweet to be imprisoned in one heart. To the Christian who, in his time of trouble, knows this gracious incursion, the blear-eyed beggar sitting on the stumps of his legs in a subway station seems lovable, the frowsy shrew lolling on the dirty window-sill of a tenement in Harlem with her hair unkempt and her fat arms lax and idle,—even she and her kind seem dear. Perhaps

it was a love and a joy like this that made the newly converted Francis of Assisi run to embrace the leper he met on the road when he was coming home from the war. Surely it must have been such a glorious sense of the unity of life that gave A. E. (George Russell) that fervent poem which is called "The Heroes." In it he says:

By many a dream of God and man my thoughts in shining flocks were led:
But as I went through Patrick Street the hopes and prophecies were dead.
The hopes and prophecies were dead: they could not blossom where the feet
Walked amid rottenness, or where the brawling shouters stamped the street.
Where was the beauty that the Lord gave men when first they towered in pride?
But one came by me at whose word the bitter condemnation died.
His brows were crowned with thorns of light: his eyes were bright as one who sees
The starry palaces shine o'er the sparkle of the heavenly seas.
"Is it not beautiful?" he cried. "Our Faery Land of Heart's Desire
Is mingled through the mire and mist, yet stainless keeps its lovely fire.
The pearly phantoms with blown hair are dancing where the drunkards reel:
The cloud frail daffodils shine out where filth is splashing from the heel.
O sweet, and sweet, and sweet to hear, the melodies in rivers run:
The rapture of their crowded notes is yet the myriad voice of One.

And in the end the poet saw

A light around the shadowy heads, a shadow round the head of light.

They who feel this unity of love and see this unearthly light in their hours of suffering will not be content merely to join organizations for philanthropy and reform, or to preach to the heathen by signing checks, though perhaps they will do these things. They will wish to give love in ways that are personal, to make innumerable channels for the overflowing of the abundance provided. Here begins that fullness of love in man of which St. Paul wrote in his masterly thirteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians. Jacob Boehme, the "dear-worthy" cobbler of Goerlitz, had much to say of this divine love, this world of light which we enter when we leave the world of wrath. Many of his sayings ought to be treasured and repeated. For him love seems to have been the very womb whence issued the universe.

> *The virtue of love is Nothing and All, or that nothing visible out of which all things proceed; its power is through all things; its height is as high as God; its greatness is as great as God. Its virtue is the principle of all principles; its power supports the heavens and upholds the earth; ******Love being the greatest majesty, is the power of all powers from whence they severally operate: and it is the holy magical root or ghostly power from whence all the wonders of God have been wrought by the hands of his elect servants in all their generations successively.*

Perhaps the words of Thomas à Kempis are better known:

> *Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more pleasant, nothing better either in Heaven or earth, because love is born of God; and rising above all created things, can find its rest in Him alone.*

One who loves flies, runs, rejoices, and is free and unrestrained.

Love gives all for all, and has all in all, for it rests in Him Who is sovereign and above all, and from whom every good flows and proceeds.

It is this love that made the cross what the first St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, once called it—"an engine of salvation." It is this love that unites God and man. True believers in Christ must find this love either here or hereafter. And true believers in love must, sooner or later, find Christ. Therefore the man who wishes to strike a foe should turn and give a flower to a child.

The love of which I am writing seems to those who have it, even to a small degree, to be a given thing, not an uprush of muddy springs from earthy sources, but a downpouring of clean vivifying rain. People who have not known it as yet often have less courteous ways of describing it. Sometimes they suppose that it is merely thwarted sexual energy. At other times, if its manifestations are touched with that celestial absurdity which is dear to poets and saints, the doubters accuse the recipients of this love of mental derangement. Sometimes the natural unsteadiness of the person who has just entered into the higher consciousness and is overwhelmed by it gives some slight excuse for misunderstanding. Plato described this condition in his allegory of the cavern. At the beginning of St. Teresa's career it was said of her that she had a devil. And sometimes, perhaps, this heavenly love, entering into the froth and turbulence of the natural life, has to struggle with it for a time and beget the new life. Yet practical people should discriminate between the hypersexed and extremely excitable person who poses as a mystic and the humble soul whose cup has been filled to overflowing with the wine of Christ. We can know

them by their fruits, if we wish. The self-styled mystic does not win the love of his fellows, nor acquire influence with them, nor produce works of beauty and wisdom and righteousness; is not a disciplined laborer in any field, but rather a lover of sensations for their own sake. Whereas the true lover becomes a "fool of Christ" in order to win people to Him and is always magnetic and powerful. Jacopone da Todi made a poem called "The Highest Wisdom" which answers all who doubt the value of this love:

Wisdom 'tis and courtesy
Crazed for Jesus Christ to be.

No such learning can be found
In Paris, nor the world around;
In this folly to abound
Is the best philosophy.

Who by Christ is all possessed
Seems afflicted and distressed,
Yet is master of the best
In science and theology.

Who for Christ is all distraught
Gives his wits, men say, for naught.
Those whom love hath never taught
Deem he erreth utterly.

He who enters in this school
Learns a new and wondrous rule.
Who hath never been a fool,
Wisdom's scholar cannot be.

It were well indeed for sensible America to learn something of this holy nonsense. If she would lay aside all the sad inhibitions of a materialistic prudence, and try, her people might achieve a

fragrant virtue far beyond mere morality, and a warm happiness that is not possible now.

It is this wise folly of love, this intimate contact with God, that distinguishes religion from philosophy, ethics, and social idealism, and is, in truth, their source. The best thought of the world has come out of minds whose working has been accelerated by inspiration. The best ethical codes have come down, like the decalogue, from heights where men communed with their Maker. And it is a well known fact that the effervescent social idealism of the young reformer often moves toward disillusionment and nervous prostration in middle age for lack of such invigoration as the touch of God can give. If we go out to help and comfort our fellows, apparently, we must be humble enough to let God comfort us. William Blake, who was said to be mad because, for one reason, he was capable of certain divine forms of foolishness, was well aware of this fact. His thought on social reform was far in advance of his day, and his mysticism was exceedingly fruitful in spite of the frequent verbal jumbles which were the result of his efforts to tell untellable things. And he said:

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh
And thy Maker is not by;
Think not thou canst weep a tear
And thy Maker is not near.

O! He gives to us His joy
That our grief He may destroy;
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

We do not have to be saints to realize this. Many people who are only clumsy beginners in "the way" might affirm this

truth with Blake if they would speak. Once I knew a woman who was fighting an ugly inward battle, half in faith, and half in fear lest it go against her. And one day she read, in the book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, the promises made to him that overcometh—I will give him the hidden manna—a new name—the morning star. A night or two later, thoroughly tired with the stress of the conflict, she went to bed early and slept heavily. Many hours later she awoke suddenly as if somebody had spoken to her, or touched her. She saw nobody in the room. With a mind still clouded by sleep she looked toward the window and there, through one pane, a lovely star was shining. That was not strange at night and in the country. But then it seemed as if she were led to the window. She looked out. In a grey-green sky above a dim blue hill her star shone all alone. She touched a match and looked at her clock. It was about half-past three. Was Our Lord offering her the morning star? That is what she thought.

Jesus, soothfast God and man,
Two kinds knit in one person,
The wonder-work that thou began
Thou hast fulfilled in flesh and bone.
Out of this world wightly thou wan,
Lifting up thyself alone;
For mightily thou rose and ran
Straight unto Thy Father on throne.
Now dare man make no more moan—
For man it is thou wroughtest thus,
And God with man is made at one;
So be my comfort, Christ Jesus.

Jesu, my sovereign Saviour,
Almighty God, there ben no mo;

Christ, thou be my governor;
Thy faith let me not fallen fro.
Jesu, my joy and my succour,
In my body and mind also,
God, thou be my strongest food,
And wisse thou me when me is woe.
Lord, thou makest friend of foe,
Let me not live in languor thus,
But see my sorrow, and say now "Ho,"
And be my comfort, Christ Jesus.

"Lord, thou makest friend of foe"—this is the test of the love that Jesus taught. It is not the bright frenzy of a happy moment, but an evident and persistent upward and outward radiation of the noblest of energies. It is gravely and powerfully concerned with the transmutation of evil into good, and of enemies into friends. The common name for this transmutation is "forgiveness." I used to wonder why Jesus said that there was in us no greater love than that which would lay down life for friends. It seemed to me that it would be greater to lay down life for enemies. But is it not that whenever people make sacrifices for enemies, those enemies are changed into friends, at least in the minds and hearts of those who make the sacrifices? And this sets in operation certain spiritual laws that lead toward reconciliation. Forgiveness, perhaps, does not test the amount and quality of the love that has been given to us, but it does prove us and show how much love we ourselves can give. If we go back to Blake again, we shall find, I think, that he had very keen things to say about it.

Every religion that preaches Vengeance for Sin is the religion of the Enemy and Avenger, and not of the Forgiver of Sin, and their God is Satan, named by the

*Divine Name. Your Religion, O Deists! Deism is the worship of the God of this World by the means of what you call Natural Religion and Natural Philosophy, and of Natural Morality or Self-Righteousness, the selfish virtues of the Natural Heart. This was the religion of the Pharisees who murdered Jesus. ****** But the Religion of Jesus, Forgiveness of Sin, can never be the cause of a war, nor of a single martyrdom. Those who martyr others, or who cause war, are Deists, but never can be Forgivers of Sin. The glory of Christianity is to conquer by Forgiveness.*

And again, at the beginning of one of his poems, he said quaintly,

Mutual Forgiveness of each vice,
Such are the Gates of Paradise,
Against the Accuser's chief desire
Who walk'd among the stones of fire.

When we have followed Christ to the forgiveness of all our other enemies we often find it most difficult to forgive ourselves. I do not mean that we find it difficult to forget our sins. That is quite another matter. But we find it difficult to practice in ourselves and for ourselves a forgiveness that begins with honest recognition and ends with the transmutation of evil into good, and that even after we feel sure that God has forgiven us. Our tendency—and perhaps it is particularly strong in these anti-Puritan and hyper-psychological times—is to attempt, more or less naively, to find noble motives for our ignoble deeds after we have done them. It is called "rationalizing" this method of explaining away our offences. We are seldom brave enough and humble enough to say to ourselves, "Yes, I did it, and it was just like me in that part of myself where it happened. Sometimes I am just that kind of a person. I am sorry. I will do what I can to set it right.

I will ask forgiveness. And then I will forgive myself." We like to seem so fine to ourselves that, no matter what the world thinks, we can avoid forgiving ourselves! We all repeat to ourselves, at odd moments, the odd ejaculation of little Jack Horner.

Theoretically Christianity requires of all Christians the ultimate forgiveness for the maximum number of the worst offenses. Actually God has never found that in any Christian but One, His only or chief Son. He met that final test of love. Not a single pulse of His blood ever beat in hatred. Not a single breath did He ever draw in malice. Therefore whatever there was in his body inherited from our kingdom of wrath was changed by God's ineffable chemistry in the mystery of His death and carried over and lifted up into the immortal kingdom of love. As David said, the "Holy One" could not see corruption. No stone could seal the tomb for such a glorified body.

Even now, even here, His followers can help Him by love and forgiveness to change, or, as Boehme says, "tincture" their mortal bodies so that they may become more like Him and know, when He wills it, His love beating in their pulses, His charity drawn in with their breath. This is one great reason for the use of sacraments and rituals. They bring the body into religion. Why should we attempt to step out of our bodies into our souls on Sundays and then out of our souls into our bodies again on Mondays? The hands that tingle with awe are the hands that have been lifted. The knees that know reverence in muscle and sinew are those that have knelt. Who would wish to be truly humble without the inclining of the head? Who would wish to love deeply without the shining of the eyes? We ought to have national and local as well as ecclesiastical sacraments, symbols in which many types and kinds of people could be united for

worship and wonder. And poets should assist saints in the making of them. Perhaps this would even exalt in our thinking and feeling the beauty of those already treasured by orthodox Christianity.

The Puritan feast of Thanksgiving Day is the beginning of such an order of observances in America. The two minutes of silent prayer on Armistice Day are sacramental in their significance —for the external life of a great people is hushed and stilled in them that something deep and moving in the national life may be remembered before God. Each one of us alone might remember and pray without stopping and keeping silence, but it is the outward sign that brings us all together and enhances the value of our inward grace. If, in unison with our neighbors, we could more frequently make our spiritual idealism manifest in bodily action, and especially in reverent, beautiful, religious action, that idealism would at once become more impressive and our sense of fellowship through noble things would grow. A well played baseball game unites the hearts of all good Americans. A moving and meaningful act of public worship ought to do the same thing for us in an even happier way, for the zest of religion is just as contagious, when it is real, as the zest of play. If we could realize this, then, in a generation or two, our forms and faces would be lovelier to look upon.

Truly we ought to be men and women of superb stature, fibre, magnetism, and demeanor to tally with this land in which we live. The broad mesas of the West, covered with aromatic sage-brush and many small blossoms that spring up imperturbably and never blink in the glare of that reiterated sunlight, rebuke us for our weakness. The regal austerity of the Rockies challenges our softness. The warm, sun-filled prairies urge us to a more

equable and generous life. Every tremendous river, every lucent trout brook, every cool blue lake is an invitation to cleanliness and sweetness of body, mind, and heart. All gracious birds of the air that live here, all the exquisite wild flowers, the great magnolia, the shy arbutus, the wild tiger lily, even the common daisy and aster of dusty roadsides, cry out to us to incorporate them in such art as the world has never seen before. Great storms chide us, and quieter breezes persuade us—but every wind that blows is calling and calling and calling us to finer life. From the resounding waters of the Atlantic to the echoing breakers of the Pacific, from the warm delta of the Mississippi to the snowy cities that guard the head of the great lakes the word goes backward and forward and up and down, the word that we are called and chosen to be a great people, to uplift the fair banners of the Lord of Hosts before the world and to carry them forward in His Name. The promised land is already in our possession. For the fulfillment of our destiny we need only Christ. But how great is our need!

Perhaps our much-criticized young people may be saying to us to-day, in language that we do not understand, "Away with sickly piety, negative moralizing, cautious and conditional theory and practice, ugliness that aches in our ears and shudders in our sight; away with staleness, dullness, and weakness. Show us a virtue that lives vividly, powerfully, intensely. Give us a religion that is full of rich meaning for the whole person even outwardly and visibly, that is unafraid of any truth which may be discovered, that is full of joy triumphing through tribulation, that can teach deep contemplation and aggressive action in strong alternating rhythms, that offers audacious experience and realizes that the two great commandments on which hang the law and

the prophets are not mere mild advice for shut-ins on rainy days, but specific directions for the use of life's glorious energy! Give us the whole Christian religion! Give us the Living Christ. He is positive, affirmative, free, radical, dynamic, beautiful, and eternal. He is all that we honor, all that we long for." If we could do this for them, if they could find Him themselves, they might bring in a new age of miracles. And the strange thing about miracles is that, no matter how much we may doubt before they happen, they often seem quite natural afterwards. Christ is just as well able to work miracles now as He ever was. It may be that we are not fit to cooperate with Him in working wonders. We may lack faith and spiritual discipline.

How can our young people find Him? In particular, how can the young intellectual agnostic find Him without making dishonest intellectual compromises that God likes even less than he likes them? Should he seek a church, first of all, or a minister? Perhaps, if life seems to be leading him in that way. And then again, perhaps not. Perhaps he would be wiser to seek Christ Himself, and let Him suggest the church later.

The quest might well begin with reading and meditation, for these require nothing in the way of a positive affirmation from the agnostic who is scrupulous about his mental integrity. Presumably he knows, being an unbeliever, the arguments against the truth of the gospel, the reality of Jesus, and the validity of Christianity. Mere fair-mindedness ought to suggest to him the value of considering the affirmative side of the argument. He will be willing to read of Jesus in the books of His friends, realizing, of course, that his own enemies and opponents never understand him so well as people who are sympathetic and interested in him. He will begin with that wonder-book, the New Testa-

ment, and if he reads it as all great literature should be read, quietly, thoughtfully, and in solitude, he may become certain, after a time, that the literal meaning of it, noble as it is, is never the whole meaning, but that a universal significance which can never be fathomed by our intellects working alone flows through it in a deep, hidden current from the beginning of things to the end, out of eternity into time and then into eternity again. I once heard a good man say, "These words are simple, but they are deep, deep as Heaven."

Then, if he will obstinately refuse all popular orthodoxies and such interpretations of them as seem to have been dictated to stenographers between committee meetings and manufactured into books, and seek out the writings of the great witnesses who, from the time of the New Testament until to-day have appeared again and again to testify for Christ with words profound, and sound, and eloquent, he will gradually perceive that this same deep current of hidden wisdom flows through their work too. St. Ignatius, the pupil of St. John, Clement of Alexandria and Origen his successor, St. Augustine, the superb St. Teresa, Jacob Boehme, George Fox,—these will have news to tell him if he will have ears to hear. So much for reading.

What do I mean by meditation? I mean a certain practice common enough in the Orient which, if introduced into strenuous American life, might save many people from nervous prostration, or at least from indigestion. I mean a process of holding an idea before the mind and under observation, of considering and reconsidering it until we have extracted as much of its meaning as we are capable of getting, and have made it our own. This does not at all decry or inhibit the value of other methods of thinking. The logical mental process that moves swiftly and keenly from

thought to thought is valuable and necessary too, but in another way. This logical thinking should be used for the management of the external and practical activities of life. Perhaps that is why Americans, and indeed all Occidentals in general, have developed this method of thought. It seems to serve their purpose. But that is no adequate reason for the total neglect of another way of using the mind, a way which is chiefly valuable for the development of higher powers in life.

If the unbeliever will consider and reconsider in this way any of the great experiences of Jesus, or of his witnesses and friends, he is likely to find out, sooner or later, that somewhere in his own nature there is a clue to such experiences, an echo and an answer to the words he is reading. The clue may lie deep under dust that the world has cast upon his holy things. The echo and the answer may be almost inarticulate at first. But his conscience is quite clear in discovering that they exist in him and for him since he has not yet committed himself to any creed. Perhaps he has not even prayed. Even St. Paul, with an admirable candor and sympathy which the clergy and others who talk with agnostics would do well to remember, said "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" If the groping human mind touches God's mind even remotely, at first, through other minds of men who have really known Him, it is enough.

Perhaps the first prayer will be an unconscious aspiration, a mere reaching gesture. Perhaps it will be a sudden fiery realization burning up all doubt once and forever. Perhaps Our Lord will make the first prayer in the unbeliever and for him Himself and listen so quietly that the man is almost unaware of it. Perhaps He will come so near to the seeker in a quick and vivid moment that the whole human consciousness in him will suddenly

awake and glow, making prayer inevitable. His way, the saints and prophets tell us, is never the same with any two souls. But when He has once been felt and perceived the candle of vision is lighted. It remains to follow Him into all truth, testing every bit of the way, if we wish, with all the powers we possess, but trying faithfully to do the will that we may learn the doctrine. As we find greater and richer experience and grapple with it, enlightenment goes on. And it may very well come to pass that the man who believed in nothing may learn to move mountains.

Moreover, if a man seeks and finds Christ in this way, it will be his own Christ that he finds, not the Christ of Wittenberg, nor the Christ of Canterbury, nor or Rome, but the Just One who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and yet gives to each of His followers such gifts as they individually need. If he enters any church or fellowship he will carry into it something that is original and fresh which he and his Lord are building up together, about that stone which is the Head of the Corner. Men, organizations, institutions, sometimes seem to be asking the same things of all of us, expecting us to be just alike. Jesus, long before Blake, knew that "one law for the lion and the ox is oppression." He asks us to be our best selves and to follow Him.

The poets whose work is offered in this book seem to have been, at least at the times when these poems were written, firm believers in the Living Christ. Some of them, through this belief, became and remained ardent mystics to the end of this temporal life. All of them have sung with clear and lovely voices as idealists who have found their inspiration in the shade of the Radiant Tree. It seems probable to me that these poems have been felt as realities, that they have been valid experiences. They have

more value, therefore, than millions of speculative treatises on subjects associated with religion.

I have given first place to Sidney Lanier's marvellous lyric of Gethsemane, "A Ballad of The Woods And The Master." It is well known, but can never be too well known. Not only is it excellent poetry, adroit in its sound echoes and clear-cut in its images, but also it is warm with tenderness and insight. The man who wrote it must have been "clean forspent" in Gethsemane himself, and must have emerged "content" after finding a new strength there.

Lizette Woodworth Reese tells us of the denial of St. Peter, Andrew Marvell of the crown of thorns, George Edward Woodberry of the scourging, Edwin Arlington Robinson and Robert Herrick of the way to Calvary.

The poems that present the scene of the Crucifixion itself are numerous. Perhaps the finest are the passionate Catholic antiphon of Richard Crashaw taken from the offices that he wrote long years ago, his chant of realization called "The Hymn of the Holy Cross" and the equally passionate modern interpretations of that radical humanitarian Protestant, Sarah N. Cleghorn. Yet this is not an inevitable choice. Many readers may prefer the quiet and somewhat obvious presentation of the picture by George Wither, the quaint philosophical musings of John Donne, the dear humanity and simplicity of Father O'Donnell's small songs. "I See His Blood Upon The Rose" by Joseph Mary Plunkett is living and radiant poetry and should be memorized by all Christians who wish to grow in the knowledge of the living presence of their Lord. For this poet, and also for Gladys Cromwell when she wrote "The Hermit," Christ seems to have been inescapable, His Cross an ever-present fact.

John Hall Wheelock tells of the descent from the cross in a poem called "The Mother" with an apt and delicate power of visualizing personality that is quite his own. He speaks of the "indomitable brow" of Jesus (how utterly unable we are to realize the strength of His will!) and of "the eyes that closed over sleep like folded wings." With the gentleness and refinement of a loving imagination he covers the stark grimness of that mutilated body so that we do not see it quite as it must have been even in the still dignity of death. Realists like Gabriel Miro do not spare us in this way when they write of the Passion. And perhaps it is well for us, sometimes, that we should not be spared, that realization should pierce to the quick. But their objective descriptions are no more valuable than Mr. Wheelock's pictorial subjectivity.

In eight lovable lines John Lydgate turns us away from the Cross and toward Heaven and gives the last message of the sacrifice. Robert Herrick says, with charming naiveté,

Tell me white Angell; what is now become
Of Him we lately seal'd up in this Tombe?

And then we come to the full chorus of the singers of the Resurrection.

I have avoided the use of translations in this book because I have wished to make it represent the literature of our own language. But I have included one because the exultant momentum of its music tempted me beyond the possibility of rejection. It is St. Notker's mighty hymn, "Cantemus Cuncti Melodum, Nunc Alleluia" translated by John Mason Neale. It is as grand in its jubilation as the Te Deum.

Two very old, plain hymns of Miles Coverdale tell the story

of Easter Day in a pleasing way. Spenser's beloved sonnet called "Easter" appeals to us.

So let us love, deare Love, lyke as we ought,
—Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

A number of well known hymns are included in this book because they are not mere versifications of correctly stated doctrines, but authentic poetry. One of them is Charles Wesley's "Christ The Lord Is Risen To-day." The version used is taken from "The Church Hymnal of The Christian Year," a book which was evidently made by people whose artistic consciences would not permit them to spoil poems, for the introduction says that only a very few minor editorial changes have been made and that the hymns offered are, for the most part, just what their makers intended them to be. It is interesting to compare the living beauty of certain phrases in this version with the dead obviousness of language in one version now used. Charles Wesley said,

Lo! our Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

The later version reads,

Jesus' agony is o'er;
Darkness veils the earth no more.

The first of these two lines might be allowed to pass as an introductory or transitional statement, but lacking the glorious symbolism of the line that Wesley used for his climax, deprives the stanza of its intensity. The second of these lines, in which, quite as usual, "darkness veils the earth," is a pathetic cliché. It should

be said, also, that this version of the hymn entirely omits the four last lines. As they were written by Wesley they gave a ringing upthrust of thought and feeling which we sorely need:

Thee we greet triumphant now,
Hail the Resurrection Thou!

Charles Wesley's even more famous Christmas hymn usually called "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," has been mutilated in a similar fashion. Good Methodists ought to start a movement for the protection of his poetic reputation. And all makers of hymnals ought to get the assistance of the best poets.

Henry Vaughan's Easter poems have a lovely naturalness and vigor. This is especially true of the one beginning,

Death and darkness, get you packing,
Nothing now to man is lacking;

George Herbert's finely wrought "Easter" has an insistent vitality. The two sonnets by Thomas S. Jones, Jr., represent his work at its very best. Christina Rossetti's lyric, "A Better Resurrection" has been considered one of her best poems. We must be very grateful to Willard Wattles for the fresh, clear intimacy of his thought about the Living Christ.

In the latter part of the book are to be found poems which relate the Easter thought to thoughts of our own immortality. One that is particularly brave and fine is Charlotte Mew's "Exspecto Resurrectionem." It is short enough to be memorized easily and used as a prayer, which it really is. "The New Ghost" by Fredegond Shove is remarkable for the astonishing beauty of its imagery. It describes the soul of a saint, newly released from the body, meeting the beloved Christ.

The spirit trembled, and sprang up at the Lord's word—
As on a wild, April day, springs a small bird—
So the ghost's feet lifting him up, he kissed the Lord's cheek,
And for the greatness of their love neither of them could speak.

But the Lord went then, to show him the way,
Over the young crocuses, under the green may
That was not quite in flower yet—to a far-distant land;
And the ghost followed, like a naked cloud holding the sun's hand.

Such poetry is a veritable shaft of light shining in the darkness of much of our thought about death.

A number of other poems have to do with the resurrection of the earth in the spring and with that crescive power of life that mankind has always celebrated. One of the best of them is John G. Neihardt's "Easter, 1923." It has a swift, energetic music which attests the fact that it has been keenly realized, and in a deft and devout way it relates the rising of the sap to the rising of Jesus from the dead.

In many a battling river
The broken gorges boom.
Behold the Mighty Giver
Emerges from the tomb!

And we are told that

The pity of the Manger
Is mighty in the grass!

Louise Imogen Guiney's noble "Beati Mortui" will have an especial meaning, I think, for the "twice-born" and for all who, through a bitter dying to self, have known a resurrection of the spirit. Richard Le Gallienne's much quoted lyric "The Second

Crucifixion" declares the immediacy of Christ's contact with humanity now and always. William Vaughn Moody's "Good Friday Night" tells the same truth in quite another way. Elsa Barker tells what should be done for Christ's little ones in places where He seems not to have risen.

At the very end of the book I have set Robert Herrick's brief definition of Paradise and "The Living Chalice" by Susan Mitchell, a warm and loving poem from which my title "The Radiant Tree" is taken. The mystical significance of these three stanzas is great. Many and many a soul, longing to feast at the heavenly table, finds that the full cup passes by. But a place is sometimes found for the humble who offer themselves as cups from which the Master of life may drink.

Sharp pain hath wrung the Clusters of my Vine;
My heart is rose-red with its brimmed wine.
Thou hast new-set the Feast and I draw nigh—
Master of Life take me, Thy Cup am I.

Herein is one of the grave, reiterated paradoxes of Christianity, that the boon denied to fullness is granted to sacrifice.

We live in a world of many crucifixions. In every land, even in this prosperous land of ours, and in every city of every land, men and women hang in agony and die in grief on crosses of loneliness, fatigue, fear, doubt, bereavement, poverty, pain, and sin. When they have died it may well be, by God's mercy, that each one is taken down from the cross and laid in a sepulcher where never man was laid before, in the resting-time that He gives before the Resurrection. The tombs are sealed with a stony silence. The armed guards of darkness are at hand to prevent the arrival of new light and life.

But stones can still be rolled away. There are still angels. And all Christians should repeat for their fellows, as for Christ Himself, "The Lord is risen." "The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon." The Cross never tells the whole story. The Radiant Tree growing up into eternity does that. Our task as members of the One Body is not ended when we sympathize with suffering and try to help sufferers. We must also look for the great renewal. We must expect and teach the uprushing joy of the everlasting life. In the resurrection stories as they are given in the New Testament we learn that many kinds of people were privileged to see the Risen Lord, Mary Magdalen and St. Peter and St. Paul and St. John—even the staunch, but doubtful St. Thomas. And many kinds of people in many lands and times have known the same high wonder at His reappearance since those early days. One thing these witnesses seem to have had in common. They were thinking about Him when He came. Usually they were loving Him passionately and sorrowing for their absence from Him.

Perhaps if we would find Him Who was and is the Resurrection and the Life, we must simply turn our minds and hearts toward Him. We do not move away from a candle into a dark corner when we wish to read by its light. Whatever we love, to that we give our concentrated attention. And we become like whatever it is that we love. And that likeness draws us nearer to it, perhaps enables us to know it well, to be at one with it. Knowing this not only through psychological study, but also through practical experience, shall we not wish to give our concentrated love to the loveliest, the wisest, the best, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and so be able to find and share the Resurrection?

What is true for individuals may have even larger meanings for nations and races. Anna Hempstead Branch, our gracious American mystic says that

"They are all one flesh
That the Spirit blows upon."

That one Spirit blowing down the ages declares the immortality of beauty and goodness and truth and cares for what Harold Pulsifer, in an excellent sonnet, speaks of as "the harvest of time."

Time winnows beauty with a fiery wind,
Driving the dead chaff from the living grain.
Some day there will be golden sheaves to bind;
There will be wonder in the world again.
There well be lonely phrases born to power,
There will be words immortal and profound;
Though no man knows the coming of the hour,
And no man knows the sower or the ground.
It may be even now the ranging earth
Lifting to glory some forgotten land
Feels there deep beauty quickening to birth,
Sprung from the sowing of a hidden hand.
Beauty endures though towering empires die.
Oh, speed the blown chaff down the smoking sky.

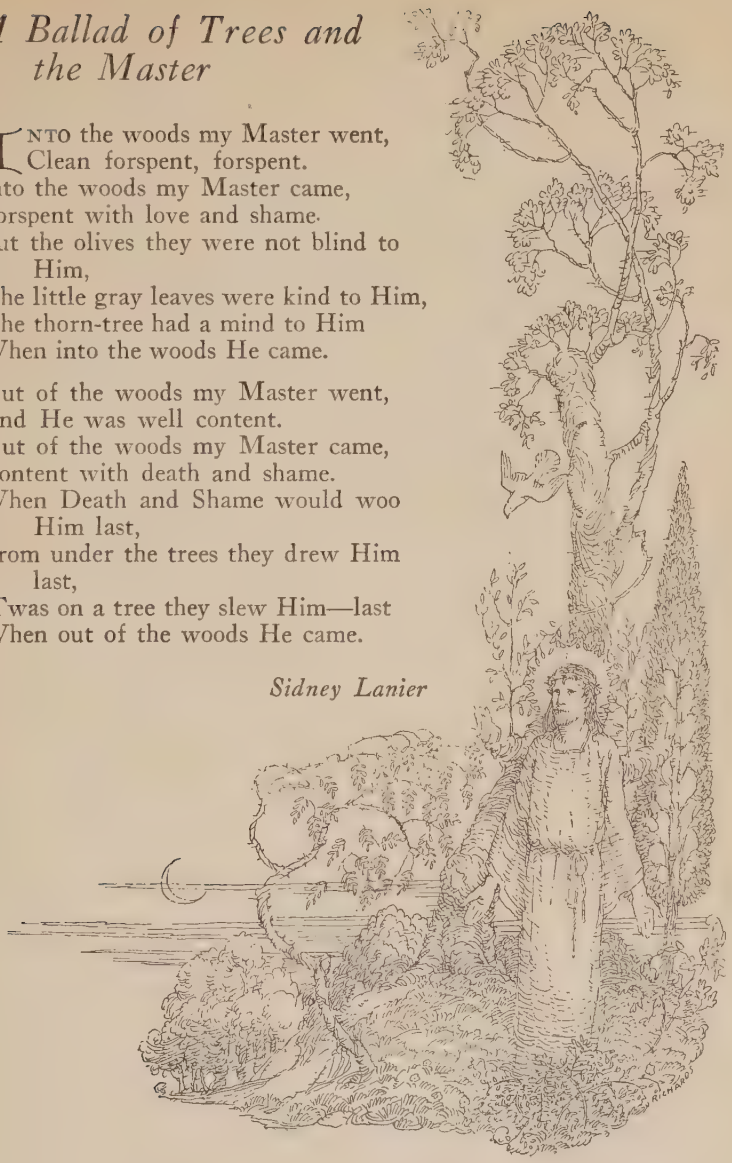
Assuredly there will be wonder in the world again whenever men and women and nations turn from their Crosses to their Christ and find in Him the rising sap that is food for the Spirit, the warm rain and sunlight of His love.

A Ballad of Trees and the Master

INTO the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him,
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last,
'Twas on a tree they slew Him—last
When out of the woods He came.

Sidney Lanier



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Good Friday

PETER and James and John,
The sad tale runneth on—
All slept and Thee forgot;
One said he knew Thee not.

Peter and James and John,
The sad tale runneth on—
I am that one, the three;
Thus have I done to Thee.

Under a garden wall
I lay at evenfall;
I waked. Thou calledst me;
I had not watched with Thee.

Peter and James and John,
The sad tale runneth on—
By the priest's fagot hot
I said I knew Thee not.

The little maid spake out:
"With Him thou wentest about."
"This man I never met—"
I hear the cock crow yet.

Lizette Woodworth Reese

WHEN with the thorns with which I long, too long,
With many a piercing wound,
My Saviour's head have crowned,
I seek with garlands to redress that wrong,—
Through every garden, every mead,
I gather flowers (my fruits are only flowers)
Dismantling all the fragrant towers
That once adorned my shepherdess's head:
And now, when I have summed up all my store,
Thinking (so I myself deceive)
So rich a chaplet thence to weave
As never yet the King of Glory wore,
Alas! I find the Serpent old,
Twining in his speckled breast,
About the flowers disguised does fold,
With wreaths of fame and interest.
Ah foolish man, that would'st debase with them,
And mortal glory, Heaven's diadem!
But thou who only could'st the Serpent tame,
Either his slippery knots at once untie,
And disentangle all his winding snare,
Or shatter too with him my curious frame,
And let these wither so that he may die,
Though set with skill, and chosen out with care,
That they, while thou on both their spoils dost tread,
May crown thy feet, that could not crown thy head.

Andrew Marvell

Christ Scourged

I saw in Siena pictures,
  Wandering wearily;
I sought not the names of the masters
  Nor the works men care to see;
But once in a low-ceiled passage
  I came on a place of gloom,
Lit here and there with haloes
  Like saints within the room.
The pure, serene, mild colors
  The early artists used
Had made my heart grow softer,
  And still on peace I mused.
Sudden I saw the Sufferer,
  And my frame was clenched with pain;
Perchance no throe so noble
  Visits my soul again.
Mine were the stripes and the scourging;
  On my thorn-pierced brow blood ran;
In my breast the deep compassion
  Breaking the heart for man.
I drooped with heavy eyelids,
  Till evil should have its will;
On my lips was silence gathered;
  My waiting soul stood still.
I gazed, nor knew I was gazing;
  I trembled, and woke to know
Him whom they worship in Heaven
  Still walking on earth below.

Once have I borne His sorrows
Beneath the flail of fate!
Once in the woe of His passion,
I felt the soul grow great!
I turned from my dead Leader;
I passed the silent door;
The gray-walled street received me;
On peace I mused no more.

George Edward Woodberry

Calvary

FRIENDLESS and faint, with martyred steps and slow,
Faint for the flesh, but for the spirit free,
Stung by the mob that came to see the show,
The Master toiled along to Calvary;
We jibed Him, as He went, with houndish glee,
Till His dim eyes for us did overflow;
We cursed His vengeless hands thrice wretchedly,—
And this was nineteen hundred years ago.

But after nineteen hundred years the shame
Still clings, and we have not made good the loss
That outraged faith has entered in His name.
Ah, when shall come love's courage to be strong!
Tell me, O Lord—tell me, O Lord, how long
Are we to keep Christ writhing on the Cross!

Edwin Arlington Robinson

His Saviours words, going to the Crosse

HAVE, have ye no regard, all ye
Who passe this way, to pitie me,
Who am a man of miserie!

A man both bruis'd, and broke, and one
Who suffers not here for mine own,
But for my friends *transgression*!

Ah! *Sions Daughters*, do not feare
The *Crosse*, the *Cords*, the *Nailes*, the *Speare*,
The *Myrrhe*, the *Gall*, the *Vineger*:

For *Christ*, your loving Saviour, hath
Drunk up the wine of Gods fierce wrath;
Onely, there's left a little froth,

Lesse for to tast, then for to shew,
What bitter cups had been your due,
Had He not drank them up for *you*.

Robert Herrick

Judge Me, O Lord

If I had been in Palestine,
A poor disciple I had been.
I had not risked or purse or limb
All to forsake, and follow Him.
But with the vast and wondering throng
I too had stood and listened long;
I too had felt my spirit stirred
When the beatitudes I heard.

With the glad crowd that sang the psalm,
I too had sung, and strewed the palm;
Then slunk away in dastard shame
When the high priest denounced his name.
But when my late companions cried,
"Away! let Him be crucified!"
I would have begged, with tremulous
Pale lips, "Release Him unto us."

Beside the cross when Mary prayed,
A great way off I too had stayed;
Not even in that hour had dared,
And for my dying Lord declared;
But beat upon my craven breast,
And loathed my coward heart at least,
To think my life I dared not stake
And beard the Romans for His sake.

Sarah N. Cleghorn

Christ Crucified

THY restless feet now cannot go
For us and our eternal good,
As they were ever wont. What though
They swim, alas! in their own flood?

Thy hands to give Thou canst not lift,
Yet will Thy hand still giving be;
It gives, but O, itself's the gift!
It gives tho' bound, tho' bound 'tis free!

Richard Crashaw

You That Like Heedless Strangers Pass Along

YOU that like heedless strangers pass along,
As if nought here concerned you to-day;
Draw nigh, and hear the saddest passion song,
That ever you did meet with in your way:
So sad a story ne'er was told before,
Nor shall there be the like for evermore.

The greatest King that ever wore a crown,
More than the basest vassal was abus'd;
The truest lover that was ever known,
By them he lov'd was most unkindly us'd:
And he that liv'd from all transgressions clear,
Was plagu'd for all the sins that ever were.

E'en they, in pity of whose fall he wept,
Wrought for his ruin, whilst he sought their good;
And watched for him, when they should have slept,
That they might quench their malice in his blood:
Yet, (when their bonds from him he could have thrown,)
To save their lives he deign'd to lose his own.

Those, in whose hearts compassion should have been,
Insulted o'er his poor afflicted soul;
And those that nothing ill in him had seen,
(As guilty,) him accus'd of treason foul:
Nay, him, (that never had one idle thought,)
They for blaspheming unto judgment brought.

Where, some to ask him vain demands begin;
And some to make a sport with him devise:
Some at his answers and behaviour grin,
And some do spit their filth into his eyes:
Some give him blows, some mock, and some revile,
And he, (good heart,) sits quiet all the while.

Oh that, where such a throng of men should be,
No heart was found, so gentle to relent!
And that so good and meek a Lamb as he
Should be so us'd, and yet no tear be spent!
Sure, when once malice fills the heart of man,
Nor stone, nor steel, can be so hardened then.

For, after this, his clothes from him they stript,
And then, as if some slave this Lord had been,
With cruel rods and scourges him they whipt,
Till wounds were over all his body seen:
In purple clad, and crowned too with thorn,
They set him forth, and honour'd him in scorn.

And, when they saw him in so sad a plight,
As might have made a flinty heart to bleed,
They not a whit recanted at the sight,
But in their hellish fury did proceed:
Away with him! Away with him! they said;
And, Crucify him! Crucify him! cried.

A cross of wood, that huge and heavy was,
Upon his bloody shoulders next they lay;
Which onward to his execution-place
He carried, till he fainted in the way:
And when he thither weak and tired came,
To give him rest, they nail'd him to the same.

Oh! could we but the thousandth part relate,
Of those afflictions, which they made him bear;
Our hearts with passion would dissolve thereat,
And we should sit and weep for ever here;
Nor should we glad again hereafter be,
But that we hope in glory him to see.

For while upon the cross he pained hung,
And was with soul-tormentings also griev'd,
(Far more than can be told by any tongue,
Or in the hearts of mortals be conceiv'd)
Those, for whose sake he underwent such pain,
Rejoic'd thereat, and held him in disdain.

One offer'd to him vinegar and gall;
A second did his pious works deride;
To dicing for his robes did others fall;
And many mock'd him, when to God he cried;
Yet he, as they his pain still more procur'd,
Still lov'd, and for their good the more endur'd.

But, though his matchless love immortal were,
It was a mortal body he had on,
That could no more than mortal bodies bear;
Their malice, therefore, did prevail thereon:
And lo, their utmost fury having tried,
This Lamb of God gave up the ghost, and died.

Whose death, though cruel unrelenting man
Could view, without bewailing, or affright;
The sun grew dark, the earth to quake began,
The Temple veil did rend asunder quite;
Yea, hardest rocks therewith in pieces brake,
And graves did open, and the dead awake.

Oh, therefore, let us all that present be,
This innocent with moved souls embrace;
For this was our Redeemer, this was he,
Who thus for our unkindness used was;
E'en he, the cursed Jews and Pilate slew,
Is he alone, of whom all this is true.

Our sins of spite were part of those that day,
Whose cruel whips and thorns did make him smart;
Our lusts were those that tir'd him in the way;
Our want of love was that which pierc'd his heart:
And still when we forget, or slight his pain,
We crucify and torture him again.

George Wither

The Hymn of the Holy Cross

Look up, languishing soul! Lo, where the fair
Badge of thy faith calls back thy care,
And bids thee ne'er forget
Thy life is one long debt
Of love to Him who, on this painful tree,
Paid back the flesh He took for thee.

Lo, how the streams of life from that full nest
Of love, thy Lord's too liberal breast
Flow in an amorous flood
Of water wedding blood!
With these He wash'd thy stain, transferr'd thy smart,
And took it home to His own heart.

But thou, great Love, greedy of such sad gain,
Usurp'd the portion of Thy pain,
And from the nails and spear
Turn'd the steel point of fear,
Their use is changed, not lost; and now they move
Not stings of wrath, but wounds of love.

Tall tree of life! Thy truth makes good
What was till now ne'er understood,
Though the prophetic King
Struck loud his faithful string;
It was thy wood he meant should make the throne
For a more than Solomon.

Large throne of Love! royally spread
With purple of too rich a red;
  Thy crime is too much duty;
  Thy burthen too much beauty!
Glorious or grievous more? thus to make good
Thy costly excellence with thy King's own blood.

Even balance of both worlds! our world of sin,
And that of grace heav'n weigh'd in Him,
  Us with our price thou weighed'st;
  Our price for us thou prayed'st;
Soon as the right-hand scale rejoiced to prove
How much death weigh'd more light than Love.

Hail, our alone Hope! let Thy fair head shoot
Aloft; and fill the nations with Thy noble fruit.
  The while our hearts and we
  Thus graft ourselves on Thee,
Grow Thou, and they; and be Thy fair increase
The sinner's pardon, and the just man's peace.

Live, O, for ever live and reign,
The Lamb whom His own love has slain!
And let Thy lost sheep live t'inherit
That kingdom which this Cross did merit. *Amen.*

Richard Crashaw

From "The Crosse"

WHO can blot out the Crosse, which th' instrument
Of God, dew'd on mee in the Sacrament?
Who can deny mee power, and liberty
To stretch mine armes, and mine owne Crosse to be?
Swimme, and at every stroake, thou art thy Crosse;
The Mast and yard make one, where seas do tosse;
Looke downe, thou spiest out Crosses in small things;
Looke up, thou seest rais'd on crossed wings;
All the Globes frame, and spheares, is nothing else
But the Meridians crossing Parallels.
Material Crosses then, good physicke bee,
But yet spirituall have chiefe dignity.
These for extracted chimique medicine serve,
And cure much better, and as well preserve;
Then are you your own physicke, or need none,
When Still'd, or purg'd by tribulation.
For when that Crosse ungrudg'd, unto you stickes,
Then are you to your selfe, a Crucifixe.
As perchance, Carvers do not faces make,
But that away, which hid them there, do take;
Let Crosses, soe, take what hid Christ in thee,
And be his image, or not his, but hee.

John Donne

My Master

My Master was so very poor,
A manger was His cradling place;
So very rich my Master was
Kings came from far
To gain His grace.

My Master was so very poor
And with the poor He broke the bread;
So very rich my Master was
That multitudes
By Him were fed.

My Master was so very poor
They nailed Him naked to a Cross;
So very rich my Master was
He gave His all
And knew no loss.

Harry Lee

THANKS to St. Matthew who had been
At mass-meetings in Palestine,
We know whose side was spoken for
When Comrade Jesus had the floor.

"Where sore they toil and hard they lie,
Among the great unwashed dwell I;—
The tramp, the convict, I am he;
Cold-shoulder him; cold-shoulder me."

By Dives' door with thoughtful eye,
He did to-morrow prophesy;—
"The Kingdom's gate is low and small;
The rich can scarce wedge through at all."

"A dangerous man," said Caiaphas;
"And ignorant demagogue, alas!
Friend of low women, it is he
Slanders the upright Pharisee."

For law and order, it was plain,
For holy church, he must be slain.
The troops were there to awe the crowd
And violence was not allowed.

Their clumsy force with force to foil
His strong, clean hands He would not soil,
He saw their childishness quite plain
Between the lightnings of His pain.

Between the twilights of His end,
He made His fellow-felon friend;
With swollen tongue and blinding eyes
Invited him to Paradise.

Ah, let no local Him refuse!
Comrade Jesus hath paid His dues.
Whatever other be debarred
Comrade Jesus hath His red card.

Sarah N. Cleghorn

Crucifixion

In the crowd's multitudinous mind
Terror and passion embrace,
Whilst the darkness heavily blind
Hides face from horror-struck face;
And all men, huddled and dumb,
Shrink from the death-strangled cry,
And the hidden terror to come,
And the dead men hurrying by.
White gleams from the limbs of the dead
Raised high o'er the blood-stained sod,
And the soldier shuddered and said,
'Lo, this was the son of God.'
Nay, but all Life is one,
A wind that wails through the vast,
And this deed is never done,
This passion is never past.
When any son of man by man's blind doom
On any justest scaffold strangled dies,
Once more across the shadow-stricken gloom
Against the sun the dark-winged Horror flies,
A lost voice cries from the far olive trees
Weary and harsh with pain, a desolate cry,
What ye have done unto the least of these
Is done to God in Heaven, for earth and sky,
And bird and beast, green leaves and golden sun,
Men's dreams, the starry dust, the bread, the wine,
Rivers and seas, my soul and his, are one.
Through all things flows one life austere, divine,

Strangling the murderer you are slaying me,
  Scattering the stars and leaves like broken bread,
Casting dark shadows on the sun-lit sea,
  Striking the swallows and the sea-gulls dead,
Making the red rose wither to its fall,
  Darkening the sunshine, blasting the green sod,—
Wounding one soul, you wound the soul of all,
  The unity of Life, the soul of God.

Eva Gore-Booth

On the Still Surviving Marks of Our Saviour's Wounds

WHATEVER story of their cruelty,
Or nail, or thorn, or spear have writ in Thee,
Are in another sense
Still legible;
Sweet is the difference:
Once I did spell
Every red letter
A wound of Thine;
Now, what is better,
Balsam for mine.

Richard Crashaw

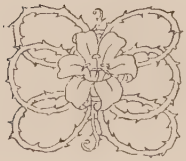
I See His Blood Upon the Rose

I SEE His blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power
Rocks are his written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross is every tree.

Joseph Mary Plunkett



The Hermit

I MARK the hermit's den,
And ponder why he fled
So far from other men;
Why chose to make his bed
In lonely Nature's fen.

For surely he must tread
On yearnings even there:
And he must see—outspread—
The vital branches bear
The burden of Christ dead.

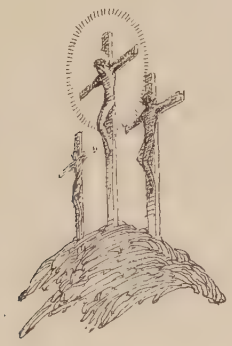
Gladys Cromwell

Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward

LET mans Soule be a Spheare, and then, in this,
The intelligence that moves, devotion is,
And as the other Spheares, by being growne
Subject to forraigne motions, lose their owne,
And being by others hurried every day,
Scarce in a yeare their naturall forme obey:
Pleasure or businesse, so, our Soules admit
For their first mover, and are whirld by it.
Hence, is't, that I am carryed towards the West
This day, when my Soules forme bends toward the East.
There I should see a Sunne, by rising set,
And by that setting endlesse day beget;
But that Christ on this Crosse, did rise and fall,
Sinne had eternally benighted all.
Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for mee.
Who sees Gods face, that is selfe like, must dye;
What a death were it then to see God dye?
It made his owne Lieutenant Nature shrinke,
It made his footstoole crack, and the Sunne winke.
Could I behold those hands which span the Poles,
And turne all spheares at once, pierc'd with those holes?
Could I behold that endlesse height which is
Zenith to us, and our Antipodes,
Humbled below us? or that blood which is
The seat of all our Soules, if not of his,
Made durt of dust, or that flesh which was worne
By God, for his apparell, rag'd and torne?

If on these things I durst not looke, durst I
Upon his miserable mother cast mine eye,
Who was Gods partner here, and furnish'd thus
Halfe of that Sacrifice, which ransom'd us?
Though these things, as I ride, be from mine eye,
They are present yet unto my memory,
For that looks towards them; and thou look'st towards mee,
O Saviour, as thou hang'st upon the tree;
I turne my backe to thee, but to receive
Corrections, till thy mercies bid thee leave.
O thinke mee worth thine anger, punish mee,
Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,
Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace,
That thou may'st know mee, and I'll turne my face.

John Donne



The Cross

WHEN Christ went up the April roads
The winds of April wept,
But through the woodway's early buds
Triumphant murmur swept:
"On every height while time shall be
Shall shine the glory of a Tree."

Charles L. C. O'Donnell

An Antiphon

O SAD, sweet tree!
Woeful and joyful, we
Both weep and sing in shade of thee:
When the dear nails did lock
And graft into thy precious stock
The hope, the health,
The worth, the wealth
Of all the ransom'd world, thou hadst the power,
In that propitious hour,
To poise each precious limb,
And prove how light the world was when it weigh'd
with Him.
Wide may'st thou spread
Thine arms; and with thy bright and blissful head
O'erlook all Libanus! Thy lofty crown
The King Himself is; thou His humble throne.
Where yielding, and yet conquering, He
Proved a new path of patient victory,
When wond'ring death by death was slain,
And our captivity His captive ta'en.

Richard Crashaw

Oberammergau

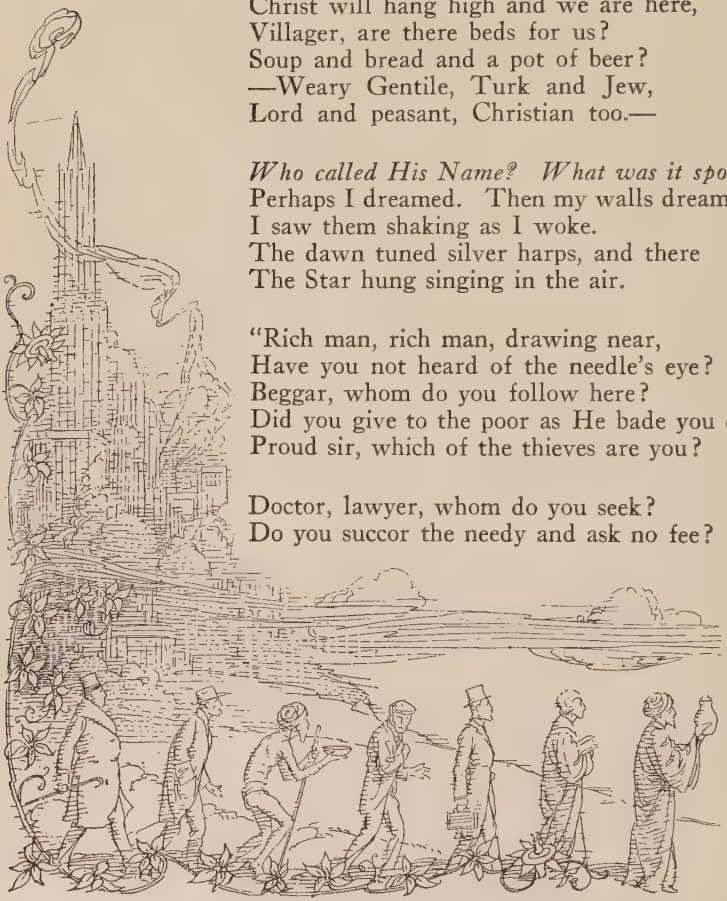
RICH man, poor man, beggar-man, thief,
Over the hills to the mountain folk,
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief,
Across the world they find their way;
Christ will be crucified to-day.

Christ will hang high and we are here,
Villager, are there beds for us?
Soup and bread and a pot of beer?
—Weary Gentile, Turk and Jew,
Lord and peasant, Christian too.—

Who called His Name? What was it spoke?
Perhaps I dreamed. Then my walls dreamed!
I saw them shaking as I woke.
The dawn tuned silver harps, and there
The Star hung singing in the air.

"Rich man, rich man, drawing near,
Have you not heard of the needle's eye?
Beggar, whom do you follow here?
Did you give to the poor as He bade you do?
Proud sir, which of the thieves are you?

Doctor, lawyer, whom do you seek?
Do you succor the needy and ask no fee?



Chief, will you turn the other cheek?
Merchant, there is a story grim
Of money-changers scourged by Him!"

The Star leaned lower from the sky;
"O men in holy orders dressed,
Hurrying so to see Him die,
Important as becomes your creed,
Why bring you dogma for His need?"

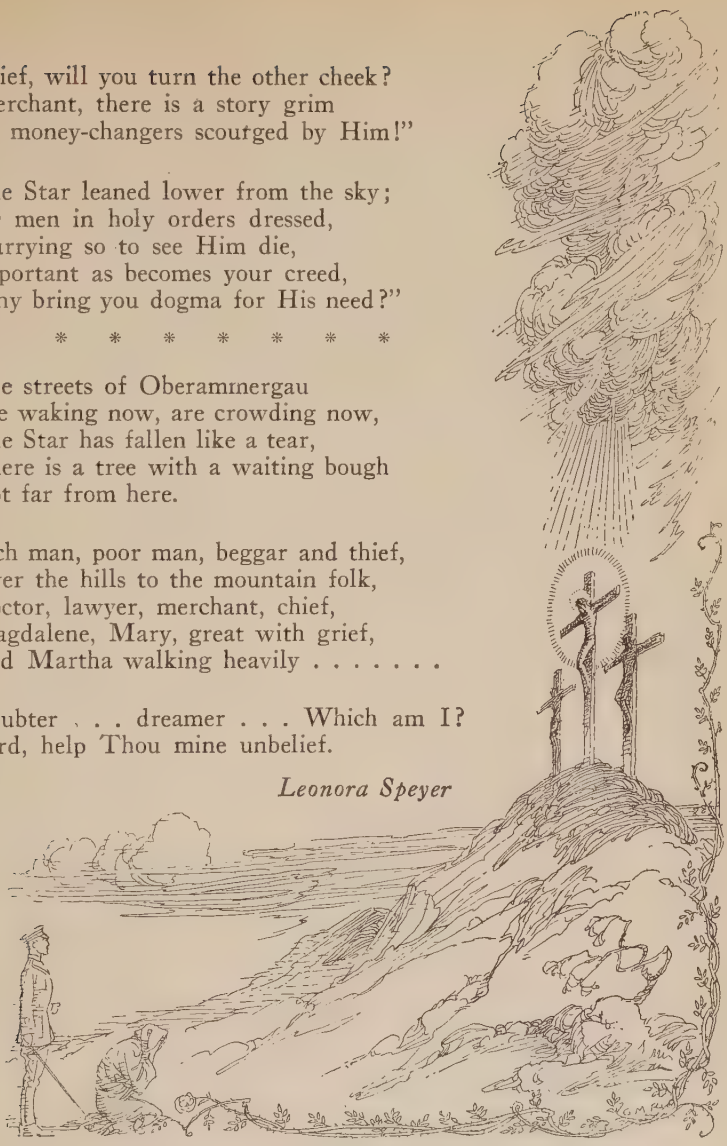
* * * * * * *

The streets of Oberammergau
Are waking now, are crowding now,
The Star has fallen like a tear,
There is a tree with a waiting bough
Not far from here.

Rich man, poor man, beggar and thief,
Over the hills to the mountain folk,
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief,
Magdalene, Mary, great with grief,
And Martha walking heavily . . . . . .

Doubter . . . dreamer . . . Which am I?
Lord, help Thou mine unbelief.

Leonora Speyer



Christ And The Pagan

I HAD no God but these,
The sacerdotal Trees,
And they uplifted me.
'I hung upon a Tree.'

The sun and moon I saw,
And reverential awe
Subdued me day and night.
'I am the perfect Light.'

Within a lifeless Stone—
All other gods unknown—
I sought Divinity.
'The Corner-Stone am I.'

For sacrificial feast,
I slaughtered man and beast,
Red recompense to gain.
'So I, a Lamb was slain.'

'Yea; such my hungering Grace
That whereso'er My face
Is hidden, none may grope
Beyond eternal Hope.

John Bannister Tabb

The Veil

THE temple veil of gold and scarlet thread
King's daughters wove on hoops of silver wire,
With Cherubim in purple wools of Tyre,
Was rent in twain the hour a God lay dead;
But folds more dense than fleece of rams dyed red
Still hide the Holiest from the heart's desire,—
A web of worlds whose shadows are the fire
That stars the night with hope when day has fled.
Yet through the mystic woof no hands have spun
Man heard the thundered covenant and saw
Prophetic flame lead earth's mysterious race;
And He Who proved that life and death are one
Shall come again as God's High Priest to draw
The living veil from Love's abiding place.

Thomas S. Jones, Jr.

O my chief good!
My dear, dear God!
When Thy best blood
Did issue forth forc'd by the rod
What pain didst Thou
Feel in each blow!
How didst Thou weep,
And Thyself steep
In Thy own precious, saving tears!
What cruel smart
Did tear Thy heart!
How didst Thou groan it
In the spirit,
O Thou, whom my soul loves, and fears!

Most blessed Vine!
Whose juice so good
I feel as wine,
But Thy fair branches felt as blood,
How wert Thou prest
To be my feast!
In what deep anguish
Didst Thou languish!
What springs of sweat and blood did drown Thee!
How in one path
Did the full wrath
Of Thy great Father
Crowd and gather,
Doubling Thy griefs, when none could own Thee!

How did the weight
Of all our sins,
And death unite
To wrench and rack Thy blessed limbs!
How pale and bloody
Look'd Thy body!
How bruis'd and broke
With every stroke!
How meek and patient was Thy spirit!
How didst Thou cry,
And groan on high
"Father forgive,
And let them live!
I die to make my foes inherit!"

O blessed Lamb;
That took'st my sin,
That took'st my shame,
How shall Thy dust Thy praises sing!
I would I were
One hearty tear!
One constant spring!
Then would I bring
Thee two small mites, and be at strife
Which should most vie,
My heart, or eye,
Teaching my years
In smiles and tears
To weep, to sing, Thy death, my life. *Henry Vaughan*

The Mother

THERE was a trampling of horses from Calvary
Where the armed Romans rode from the mountain side;
Yet riding they dreamed of the soul that could rise free
Out of the bruised breast and the arms nailed wide.

There was a trampling of horses from Calvary,
And the long spears glittered in the night;
Yet riding they dreamed of the will that dared to be,
When the head fell and the heavens were rent with light.

The eyes that closed over sleep like folded wings
And the sad mouth that kissed death with the cry,
"Father, forgive them,—" silently these things
They remembered, riding down from Calvary.

And Joseph, when the sick body was lowered slowly
Folded it in a white cloth without seam,
The indomitable brow, inflexible and holy,
And the sad breast that held the immortal dream.

And the feet that could not walk, and the pierced hands,
And the arms that held the whole world in their embrace;
But Mary, beside the cross-tree could not understand,
Looking upon the tired human face.

John Hall Wheelock

Upon our Saviour's Tomb, wherein never man was laid

How life and death in Thee
Agree!
Thou hadst a virgin womb
And Tomb.
A Joseph did betroth
Them both.

Richard Crashaw

Upon the Sepulchre of our Lord

HERE, where our Lord once laid His Head,
Now the grave lies buried.

Richard Crashaw

Vox ultima Crucis

TARYE no lenger; toward thyn heritage
Hast on thy weye, and be of ryght good chere.
Go eche day onward on thy pylgrymage;
Thynke howe short tyme thou hast abyden here.
Thy place is bygged above the sterres clere,
Noon erthly palys wrought in so statly wyse.
Come on, my frend, my brother most entere!
For the I offered my blood in sacryfice.

John Lydgate

Bread and Wine

(Passionis Tuae Memoriam Reliquisti)

HEROD's Fool and Pilate's King,
Purple cloths and white we bring:
Cloak Thee in the pale wheat, hide
In clusters of the blue hillside.

Charles L. C. O'Donnell

His coming to the Sepulcher

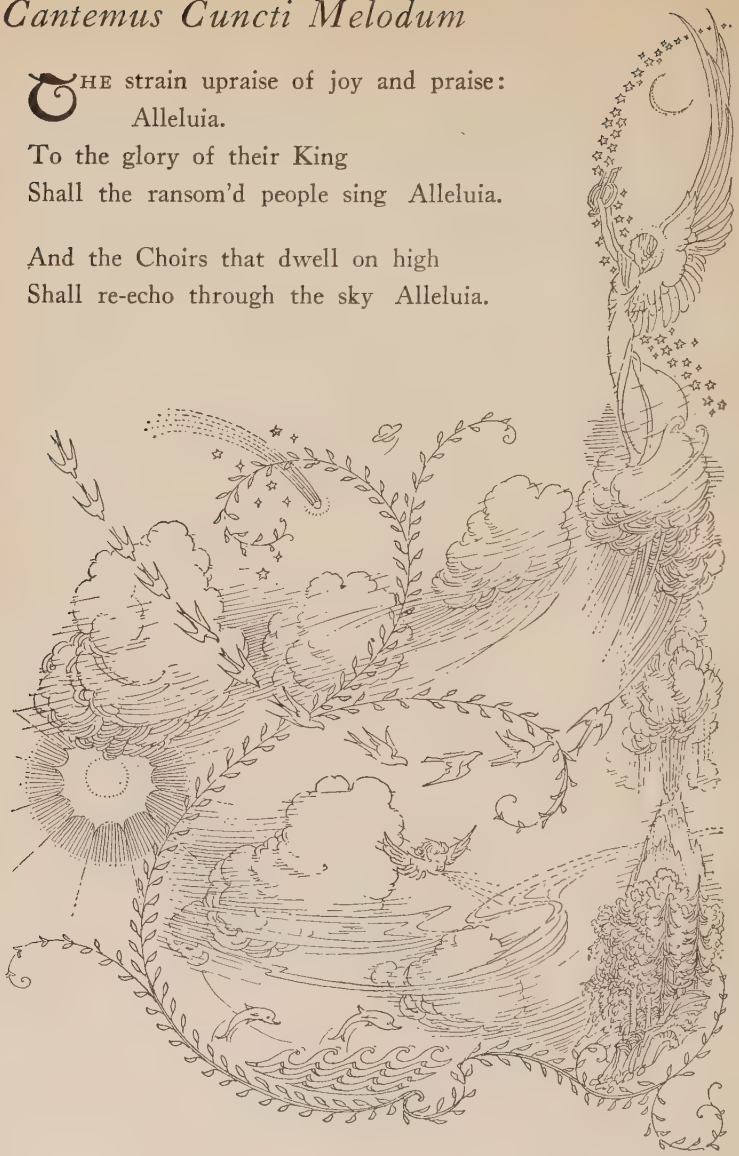
HENCE they have born my Lord: Behold! the Stone
Is rowl'd away; and my sweet Saviour's gone!
Tell me, white Angell; what is now become
Of Him, we lately seal'd up in this Tombe?
Is He, from hence, gone to the shades beneath,
To vanquish Hell, as here He conquer'd Death?
If so; I'le thither follow, without feare;
And live in Hell, if that my *Christ* stayes there.

Robert Herrick

Cantemus Cuncti Melodum

THE strain upraise of joy and praise:
Alleluia.
To the glory of their King
Shall the ransom'd people sing Alleluia.

And the Choirs that dwell on high
Shall re-echo through the sky Alleluia.



They through the fields of Paradise that roam,
The blessed ones, repeat through that bright home Alleluia.

The planets, glitt'ring on their heavenly way,
The shining constellations, join and say Alleluia.

Ye clouds that onward sweep!
Ye winds on pinions light!
Ye thunders, echoing loud and deep!
Ye lightnings, wildly bright!
In sweet consent unite your Alleluia.

Ye floods and ocean billows!
Ye storms and winter snow!
Ye days of cloudless beauty!
Hoar frost and summer glow!
Ye groves that wave in spring,
And glorious forests, sing Alleluia.

First let the birds, with painted plumage gay,
Exalt their great Creator's praise, and say Alleluia.

Then let the beasts of earth, with varying strain,
Join in Creation's Hymn, and cry again Alleluia.

Here let the mountains thunder forth, sonorous, Alleluia.

There let the valleys sing in gentler chorus, Alleluia.

Thou jubilant abyss of ocean, cry Alleluia.
Ye tracts of earth and continents, reply Alleluia.

To God, Who all Creation made,
The frequent hymn be duly paid: Alleluia.

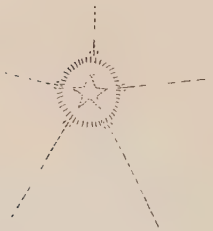
This is the strain, the eternal strain, the Lord of all things loves: Alleluia.
This is the song, the heavenly song, that Christ Himself approves: Alleluia.

Wherefore we sing, both heart and voice awaking, Alleluia.
And children's voices echo, answer making, Alleluia.

Now from all men be out-pour'd
Alleluia to the Lord;
With Alleluia evermore
The Son and Spirit we adore.

Praise be done to the Three in One,
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

John Mason Neale
Translation of Latin hymn
by St. Notker



Of the Resurrection

CHRISTE is now rysen agayne
From his death and all his payne:
Therefore wyll we mery be,
And rejoyse with hym gladly.
Kirieleyson.

Had he not rysen agayne
We had ben lost, this is playne:
But sen he is rysen in dede,
Let us love hym all with spede.
Kirieleyson.

Now is tyme of gladnesse,
To synge of the Lorde's goodnesse:
Therefore glad now wyll we be,
And rejoyse in hym onely.
Kirieleyson.

Miles Coverdale

Another of the Same

CHRIST dyed and suffred great payne,
For oure synnes and wickednesse;
But he is now rysen agayne,
To make us full of gladnesse.
Let us all rejoyse therefore,
And geve him thankes for evermore,
Synginge to hym, Alleluya.

Alleluya.

There was no man that coulde overwynne
The power of death, nor his myght:
And all this came thorow oure synne,
Wherefore we were dampned by ryght.
By occasyon of which thynge
Death took us into his kepynge;
We coulde not escape out of his syght.

Alleluya.

But the Lorde Jesu, God's owne Sonne,
Takynge on hym oure weake nature,
Hath put awaye oure synnes alone,
And overcome death thorow his power.
As for death and his great myght,
Christ hath overcome it all by ryght;
It can do us no displeasure.

Alleluya.

It was a marvelous great thynge,
To se how death with death dyd fyght:
For the one death gat the wynnynge,
And the other death lost his myght.
Holy scripture speaketh of it,
How one death another wolde byte;
The death of Christ hath wonne by ryght.
Alleluya.

This same is the ryght paschall lambe,
That was once offred for oure synne;
Into this worlde mekely he came,
From Sathan's power us to wynne.
For oure wickedness wolde he dye
And rose us for to iustifie;
The mercy of God was great therein.
Alleluya.

Miles Coverdale

Easter

MOST glorious Lord of Lyfe! that, on this day,
Didst make Thy triumph over death and sin;
And, having harrowd hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win:
This joyous day, deare Lord, with joy begin;
And grant that we, for whom thou diddest dye,
Being with Thy deare blood clene washt from sin,
May live for ever in felicity!
And that Thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same againe;
And for Thy sake, that all lyke deare didst buy,
With love may one another entertayne!
So let us love, deare Love, lyke as we ought,
—Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Edmund Spenser

Easter Hymn

DEATH and darkness, get you packing,
Nothing now to man is lacking;
All your triumphs now are ended,
And what Adam marr'd is mended;
Graves are beds now for the weary,
Death a nap, to wake more merry;
Youth now, full of pious duty,
Seeks in Thee for perfect beauty;
The weak and aged, tir'd with length
Of days, from Thee look for new strength;
And infants with Thy pangs contest
As pleasant as if with the breast.
Then, unto Him, Who thus hath thrown
Even to contempt thy kingdom down,
And by His blood did us advance
Unto His own inheritance;
To Him be glory, power, praise,
From this unto the last of days!

Henry Vaughan

Resurrection

SLEEP, sleep old Sun, thou canst not have repast
As yet, the wound thou took'st on friday last;
Sleepe then, and rest; The world may beare thy stay,
A better Sun rose before thee to day,
Who, not content to'enlighten all that dwell
On the earths face, as thou, enlightened hell,
And made the darke fires languish in that vale,
As, at thy presence here, our fires grow pale.
Whose body having walk'd on earth, and now
Hasting to Heaven, would, that he might allow
Himselfe unto all stations, and fill all,
For these three daies become a minerall;
Hee was all gold when he lay downe, but rose
All tincture, and doth not alone dispose
Leaden and iron wills to good, but is
Of power to make even sinfull flesh like his.
Had one of those, whose credulous pietie
Thought, that a Soule one might discerne and see
Goe from a body, 'at this sepulcher been,
And, issuing from the sheet, this body seen,
He would have justly thought this body a soule,
If not of any man, yet of the whole.

(*Desunt coetera*) *John Donne*

Easter Day

THIS is the day the Lord hath made,
And therein joyful we will be;
For, from the black infernal shade
In triumph back return'd is he:
The snares of Satan, and of Death,
He hath victoriously undone,
And fast in chains he bound them hath,
His triumph to attend upon.

The grave, which all men did detest,
And held a dungeon full of fear,
Is now become a bed of rest,
And no such terrors find we there.
For Jesus Christ hath took away
The horror of that loathed pit;
E'en ever since that glorious day,
In which himself came out of it.

His mockings and his bitter smarts,
He to our praise and ease doth turn,
And all things to our joy converts,
Which he with heavy heart hath borne:
His broken flesh is now our food,
His blood he shed, is ever since
That drink, which doth our souls most good,
And that which shall our foulness cleanse.

Those wounds so deep, and torn so wide,
As in a rock our shelters are;
That, which they pierced through his side,
Is made a dove-hole for his dear;
Yea, now we know, as was foretold,
His flesh did no corruption see;
And that hell wanted strength to hold
So strong, and one so blest as he.

Oh let us praise his name therefore,
(Who thus the upper hand hath won)
For we had else, for evermore,
Been lost, and utterly undone:
Whereas this favour doth allow
That we with boldness thus may sing,
Oh Hell, where is thy conquest now?
And thou (oh Death) where is thy sting?

George Wither

Christ Is Risen

CHRIST is risen! Christ is risen!
He hath burst His bonds in twain;
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
Cry of gladness, soar again.
For our gain He suffered loss
By Divine decree;
He hath died upon the Cross,
But our God is He.
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
He hath burst His bonds in twain;
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
Earth and Heaven prolong the strain!

See the chains of death are broken;
Earth below and Heaven above
Joy in each amazing token
Of His rising, Lord of Love;
He for evermore shall reign
By the Father's side,
Till He comes to earth again,
Comes to claim His bride.
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
He hath burst His bonds in twain;
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
Earth and Heaven prolong the strain!

Glorious Angels downward thronging
Hail the Lord of all the skies;
Heaven with joy and holy longing
For the Word Incarnate, cries,
"Christ is risen! Earth rejoice!
Gleam, ye starry train!
All creation find a voice;
He o'er all shall reign."
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
He hath burst His bonds in twain;
Christ is risen! Christ is risen!
O'er the universe to reign. Amen.

A. T. Gurney

Christ the Lord Is Risen To-day

CHRIST, the Lord, is risen to-day,
Sons of men and Angels say:
Raise your songs and triumphs high;
Sing, ye Heavens, and earth reply.
Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won:
Lo! our Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! He sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell;
Death in vain forbids His rise;
Christ hath opened Paradise.
Lives again our glorious King!
Where, O death! is now thy sting?
Once He died, our souls to save;
Where's thy victory, O grave?

Soar we now where Christ hath led,
Following our exalted Head:
Made like Him, like Him we rise;
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.
Hail the Lord of earth and Heaven,
Praise to Thee by both be given,
Thee we greet triumphant now,
Hail the Resurrection Thou! Amen.

Charles Wesley

Easter-day

RISE, Heir of fresh Eternity,
From thy virgin-tomb:
Rise, mighty Man of wonders, and thy World with Thee;
Thy tomb, the universal East,
Nature's new womb,
Thy tomb, fair Immortality's perfumed nest.

Of all the glories make noon gay
This is the morn;
This rock buds forth the fountain of the streams of day;
In joy's white annals lives this hour.
When life was born,
No cloud-scowl on his radiant lids, no tempest lower.

Life, by this light's nativity,
All creatures have;
Death only by this day's just doom is forced to die.
Nor is death forced; for may he lie
Throned in thy grave,
Death will on this condition be content to die.

Richard Crashaw

At Emmaus

THEY knew Him when He broke the bread:
Was it by the accompanying words He said
Which faith, though faltering, understands?
Or wounded beauty of His hands?

Charles L. C. O'Donnell

Easter-day

THOU, whose sad heart, and weeping head lies low,
Whose cloudy breast cold damps invade,
Who never feel'st the sun, nor smooth'st thy brow,
But sitt'st oppressed in the shade,
Awake! Awake!
And in His resurrection partake,
Who on this day—that thou might'st rise as He—
Rose up, and cancell'd two deaths due to thee,

Awake! awake! and, like the sun, disperse
All mists that would usurp this day;
Where are thy palms, thy branches, and thy verse?
Hosanna! hark! why dost thou stay?
Arise! arise!
And with His healing blood anoint thine eyes,
Thy inward eyes; His blood will cure thy mind,
Whose spittle only could restore the blind.

Henry Vaughan

Easter Day

EASTER-DAY, no man may,
Carol thee too sweetly.
Queen of days, Angel praise,
Scarce can hymn thee meetly.
For the Lord who stoop'd so low,
And full fain did undergo
Death for mortals, liveth
Again for evermore.
Wherefore, masters great and small,
On the Son of Mary call,
Who to-day is risen,
The Lord and God of all.

Through the sparr'd and well-barr'd
Portals of his prison,
Goddès Son, victory won,
From the dead is risen.
Ere that day had clear'd the gloom,
E'en as from the Virgin womb,
Watch and seal defying,
Our Saviour left the tomb.
Wherefore, masters great and small,
On the Son of Mary call,
Who to-day is risen,
The Lord and God of all.

For mankind, bear't in mind,
  On the Tree he mounted:
And, to quell the powers of hell,
  Was transgressor counted.
On Good Friday he was slain,
But to-day he lives again,
  That his ransomed people
With him in bliss may reign.
Wherefore, masters great and small,
On the Son of Mary call,
  Who to-day is risen,
The Lord and God of all.

George Ratcliffe Woodward

Easter

RISE heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayst rise;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or since all musick is but three parts vied,
And multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers to straw thy way;
I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,
Though he give light, and th' East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we misse:
There is but one, and that one ever.

George Herbert

Now Spring Is Come

Now Spring is come, and earth renew'd,
With foliage and flower,
Which, gend'red by the Sun, is dew'd
With timely April shower:
No longer rageth Eastern gale
That held for weeks together:
But balmy Western winds unveil,
O'er meads of herb and heather,
Fair weather, fair weather.

'Tis cuckoo time: now turtle dove
With plaintive note is wooing
His mate upon the elm above,
And stinteth not his cooing.
The laverock wingeth upward road
With carol blithe and merry;
The nightingale entuneth ode
'Mid apple bloom and perry,
Or cherry, or cherry.

The busy bees flit here and there,
Now sunbeam waxeth stronger,
And garden-plot and tree go bare
Of drapery no longer:
The air is fraught with savour sweet,
The fruits of earth are springing:
The mountain is with joy replete;
The valley-land is ringing
With singing, with singing.

Now cattle graze in pasture green;
The ewes do feed beside them,
Whose lambkins frolic morn and e'en;
Such pleasure doth betide them:
The fish with glittery scales, that swim
The deep pool and the shallow,
Rise playful to the river-brim,
Where grows the reed, the sallow,
And mallow, and mallow.

Then, O my soul, as everything
At Easter-tide is glad'ned,—
And as the world itself doth sing,
Which winter-time had sad'ned;—
As frozen earth is thaw'd by breath
Of western breeze that bloweth,—
As seed, awake from sleep of death,
In gay apparel showeth,
And groweth, and groweth.—

Then, with yon lark and nightingale,
O'er field and woody acre,
Bear thou thy part, and chanting hail
The triumph of thy Maker,
Who died to rescue thee from sin,
And from thy foe infernal;
Who rose again, that man might win
The joy of Spring supernal,
Eternal, eternal. *George Ratcliffe Woodward*

The World Itself Keeps Easter-day

THE world itself keeps Easter-Day,
And Easter larks are singing,
And Easter flowers are blooming gay,
And Easter buds are springing;
Alleluia, Alleluia!
The Lord of all things lives anew,
And all His works are rising too,
Alleluia, Alleluia!

There stood three Maries by the tomb,
On Easter morning early,
When day had scarcely chased the gloom
And dew was white and pearly.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
With loving but with erring mind,
They came the Prince of Life to find.
Alleluia, Alleluia!

But earlier still the Angel sped,
His news of comfort giving;
And "Why," he said, "Among the dead
Thus seek ye for the Living?"
Alleluia, Alleluia!
"Go, tell them all, and make them blest;
Tell Peter first, and then the rest,"
Alleluia, Alleluia!

The world itself keeps Easter-Day,
And Easter larks are singing,
And Easter flowers are blooming gay,
And Easter buds are springing;
Alleluia, Alleluia!
The Lord hath risen, as all things tell,
Good Christians, see ye rise as well!
Alleluia, Alleluia!

John Mason Neale

Lift Up, Lift Up Your Voices Now

LIFT up, lift up your voices now!
The whole wide world rejoices now;
The Lord hath triumphed gloriously,
The Lord shall reign victoriously!

In vain with stone the cave they barred;
In vain the watch kept ward and guard;
Majestic from the spoilèd tomb,
In pomp of triumph Christ is come!

He binds in chains the ancient foe;
A countless host he frees from woe,
And heaven's high portal open flies,
For Christ has risen, and man shall rise.

And all He did, and all He bare,
He gives us as our own to share;
And hope and joy and peace begin,
For Christ has won, and man shall win.

O Victor, aid us in the fight,
And lead through death to realms of light;
We safely pass where Thou hast trod;
In Thee we die to rise in God.

Thy flock, from sin and death set free,
Glad Alleluias raise to Thee;
And ever with the heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Anon

Resurrection

THE slender furrows turning green again
Once held the simple hope that men found fair,
And old Egyptian builders, brown and bare,
Carved on the tomb a sheaf of ripened grain;
The ploughman sowing in the warm sweet rain,
While slow-paced oxen drew the gleaming share,
Saw lost Persephone rise golden there
And drive her flame-wheeled car across the plain.

In fruitful valley, high wheat-crested hill,
And vineyard where the purple pigeons start,
Life waked to light and faith in life was born;
But earth's long winter lingered on until
Within the tear-sown meadow of man's heart
Christ stood among the rows of ripened corn.

Thomas S. Jones, Jr.

Easter, 1923

ONCE more the Ancient Wonder
Brings back the goose and crane,
Prophetic Sons of Thunder,
Apostles of the Rain.

In many a battling river
The broken gorges boom,
Behold the Mighty Giver
Emerges from the tomb!

Now robins chant the story
Of how the wintry sward
Is litten with the glory
Of the Angel of the Lord.

His countenance is lightning,
And still his robe is snow,
As when the dawn was brightening
Two thousand years ago.

O who can be a stranger
To what has come to pass?
The Pity of the Manger
Is mighty in the grass!

Undaunted by Decembers,
The sap is faithful yet.
The giving Earth remembers
And only men forget!

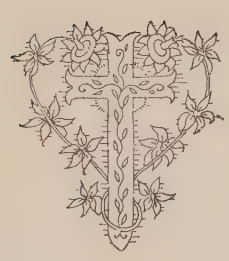
John G. Neihardt

Me Lord? can'st thou mispend
One word, misplace one look on me?
Call'st me thy Love, thy Friend?
  Can this poor soul the object be
Of these love-glances, those life-kindling eyes?
What? I the Centre of thy arms embraces?
  Of all thy labour I the prize?
  Love never mocks, Truth never lies.
Oh how I quake: Hope fear, fear hope displaces:
I would, but cannot hope: such wondrous love amazes.

  See, I am black as night,
See I am darkness: dark as hell.
  Lord thou more fair than light;
  Heav'ns Sun thy Shadow; can Suns dwell
With Shades? 'twixt light, and darkness what commerce?
True: thou art darkness, I thy Light: my ray
  Thy mists, and hellish foggs shall pierce.
  With me, black soul, with me converse.
I make the foul *December* flowry *May*,
Turn thou thy night to me: I'le turn thy night to day.

See Lord, see I am dead:
Tomb'd in my self: my self my grave.
A drudge: so born, so bred:
My self even to my self a slave.
Thou Freedome, Life: can Life, and Liberty
Love bondage, death? Thy Freedom I: I tyed
To loose thy bonds: be bound to me:
My Yoke shall ease, my bonds shall free.
Dead soul, thy Spring of life, my dying side:
There dye with me to live: to live in thee I dyed.

Phineas Fletcher



Alleluia! Alleluia!

ALLELUIA! Alleluia!
Hearts to Heaven and voices raise;
Sing to God a hymn of gladness,
Sing to God a hymn of praise.
He Who on the Cross a Victim,
For the world's salvation bled,
Jesus Christ, the King of Glory,
Now is risen from the dead.

Christ is risen, Christ the first-fruits,
Of the holy harvest field;
Which will all its full abundance
At His Second Coming yield;
Then the golden ears of harvest
Will their heads before Him wave,
Ripened by His glorious sunshine
From the furrows of the grave.

Christ is risen, we are risen!
Shed upon us Heavenly grace,
Rain, and dew, and gleams of glory
From the brightness of Thy Face;
That we, Lord, with hearts in Heaven,
Here on earth may fruitful be,
And by Angels' hands be gathered,
And be ever safe with Thee.

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glory be to God on high,
To the Father and the Saviour,
Who has gained the victory;
Glory to the Holy Spirit,
Fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
To the Triune Majesty. Amen.

Christopher Wordsworth

A Better Resurrection

I HAVE no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears.
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf;
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see;
Yet rise it shall—the sap of Spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;
Cast in the fire the perished thing;
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King:
O Jesus, drink of me.

Christina Rossetti

To One of Little Faith

PUT out the mourners from your heart,
And bid your still soul rise.
It is not death, but only sleep
That fastens down your eyes.

Return, oh Galilean days,
Judean hands, return!
Make bloom the lily in the ash
Of this neglected urn.

Hildegarde Flanner

Exspecto Resurrectionem

O H! King who hast the key
Of that dark room,
The last which prisons us but held not Thee,
Thou know'st its gloom.
Dost Thou a little love this one
Shut in to-night,
Young and so piteously alone,
Cold—out of sight?
Thou know'st how hard and bare
The pillow of that new-made narrow bed,
Then leave not there
So dear a head!

Charlotte Mew

The New Ghost

"And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus."

AND he cast it down, down on the green grass,
Over the young crocuses, where the dew was—
He cast the garment of his flesh that was full of death,
And like a sword his spirit showed out of the cold sheath.

He went a pace or two, he went to meet his Lord,
And, as I said, his spirit looked like a clean sword,
And seeing him the naked trees began shivering,
And all the birds cried out aloud as it were late spring.

And the Lord came on, He came down, and saw
That a soul was waiting there for Him, one without flaw,
And they embraced in the churchyard where the robins play,
And the daffodils hang down their heads as they burn away.

The Lord held his head fast, and you could see
That he kissed the unsheathed ghost that was gone free—
As a hot sun, on a March day, kisses the cold ground;
And the spirit answered, for he knew well that his peace was found.

The spirit trembled, and sprang up at the Lord's word—
As on a wild, April day, springs a small bird—
So the ghost's feet lifting him up, he kissed the Lord's cheek,
And for the greatness of their love neither of them could speak.

But the Lord went then, to show him the way,
Over the young crocuses, under the green may,
That was not quite in flower yet—to a far-distant land;
And the ghost followed, like a naked cloud holding the sun's hand.

Fredegond Shove

The Black Christ

(At Easter in South Africa)

PILATE and Caiaphas
They have brought this thing to pass—
That a Christ the Father gave,
Should be guest within a grave.
Church and State have willed to last
This tyranny not over-past;
His dark southern Brows around
They a wreath of briars have bound,
In His dark despised Hands
Writ in sores their writing stands.

By strait starlit ways I creep,
Caring while the careless sleep,
Bearing balms, and flow'rs to crown
That poor Head the stone holds down,
Through some crack or crevice dim
I would reach my sweets to Him.

Easter suns they rise and set,
But that stone is steadfast yet:
Past my lifting 'tis, but I
When 'tis lifted would be nigh.
I believe, whate'er they say,
The sun shall dance on Easter Day,
And I that through thick twilight grope
With balms of faith, and flow'rs of hope,
Shall lift mine eyes and see that stone
Stir and shake, if not be gone.

Arthur Shearly Cripps

Beati Mortui

BLESSED the Dead in Spirit, our brave dead
Not passed, but perfected:
Who tower up to mystical full bloom
From self, as from a known alchemic tomb;
Who out of wrong
Run forth with laughter and a broken thong;
Who win from pain their strange and flawless grant
Of peace anticipant;
Who cerements lately wore of sin, but now,
Unbound from foot to brow,
Gleam in and out of cities, beautiful
As sun-born colours of a forest pool
Where Autumn sees
The splash of walnuts from her thinning trees.

Though wondered-at of some, yea, feared almost
As any chantry ghost,
How sight of these, in hermitage or mart,
Makes glad a wistful heart!
For life's apologetics read most true
In spirits risen anew,
Like larks in air
To whom flat earth is all a heavenward stair,
And who from yonder parapet
Scorn every mortal fret,
And rain their sweet bewildering staves
Upon our furrows of fresh-delvèd graves.

If thus to have trod and left the wormy way
Makes men so wondrous gay,
So stripped and free and potently alive,
Who would not his infirmity survive,
And bathe in victory, and come to be
As blithe as ye,
Saints of the ended wars? Ah, greeting give;
Turn not away, too fugitive:
But hastening towards us, hallow the foul street,
And sit with us at meat,
And of your courtesy, on us unwise
Fix oft those purer eyes,
Till in ourselves who love them dwell
The same sure light ineffable:
Till they who walk with us in after years
Forgetting time and tears
(As we with you), shall sing all day instead:
"How blessed are the Dead!"

Louise Imogen Guiney

Prayer

WITH Him who sets the lily on the stem,
With Him who looses Summer in the loam,
With Him who wakes the winds and hushes them,
With Him who calls the dead and brings them home,
With Him the nameless, unimportunate,
The utterly within us, beautiful,
With Him I leave To-morrow, and too late
Regret I left not Yesterday as well.
Unto what loveliness may we commend
The desolation of the flesh that weeps,
To what untellable and bitter end
Shall wake the soul that lifts from sleep . . . and sleeps?
Oh rouse me up, good God, and keep me so,
Washing my heart in water of the snow!

Hildegarde Flanner

The Second Crucifixion

LOUD mockers in the roaring street
Say Christ is crucified again:
Twice pierced His gospel-bearing feet,
Twice broken His great heart in vain.

I hear, and to myself I smile,
For Christ talks with me all the while.

No angel now to roll the stone
From off His unawaking sleep,
In vain shall Mary watch alone,
In vain the soldiers vigil keep.

Yet while they deem my Lord is dead
My eyes are on His shining head.

Ah! never more shall Mary hear
That voice exceeding sweet and low
Within the garden calling clear:
Her Lord is gone, and she must go.

Yet all the while my Lord I meet
In every London lane and street.

Poor Lazarus shall wait in vain,
And Bartimæus still go blind;
The healing hem shall ne'er again
Be touch'd by suffering humankind.

Yet all the while I see them rest,
The poor and outcast, on His breast.

No more unto the stubborn heart
With gentle knocking shall He plead,
No more the mystic pity start,
For Christ twice dead is dead indeed.

So in the street I hear men say,
Yet Christ is with me all the day.

Richard Le Gallience

Good Friday Night

At last the bird that sung so long
In twilight circles, hushed his song;
Above the ancient square
The stars came here and there.

Good Friday Night! Some hearts were bowed,
But some amid the waiting crowd
Because of too much youth
Felt not the mystic ruth;

And of these hearts my heart was one:
Nor when beneath the arch of stone
With dirge and candle flame
The cross of passion came,

Did my glad spirit feel reproof,
Though on the awful tree aloof
Unspiritual, dead,
Drooped the ensanguined Head.

To one who stood where myrtles made
A little space of deeper shade
(As I could half descry,
A stranger, even as I),

I said, "Those youths who bear along
The symbols of their Saviour's wrong,
The spear, the garment torn,
The flaggel and the thorn,—

"Why do they make this mummèry?
Would not a brave man gladly die
For a much smaller thing
Than to be Christ and King?"

He answered nothing, as I turned.
Throned in its hundred candles burned
The jewelled eidolon
Of Her who bore the Son.

The crowd was prostrate; still, I felt
No shame until the stranger knelt;
Then not to kneel, almost
Seemed like a vulgar boast.

I knelt. The doll-face waxen white,
Flowered out a living dimness; bright
Dawned the dear mortal grace
Of my own mother's face.

When we were risen up, the street
Was vacant; all the air hung sweet
With lemon-flowers; and soon
The sky would hold the moon.

More silently than new-found friends
To whom much silence makes amends
For the much babble vain
While yet their lives were twain,

We walked along the odorous hill,
The light was little yet; his will
I could not seem to trace
Upon his form or face.

So when aloft the gold moon broke
I cried, heart-stung. As one who woke
He turned unto my cries
The anguish of his eyes.

"Friend! Master!" I cried falteringly,
"Thou seest the thing they make of Thee,
Oh, by the light divine,
My mother shares with thine,

I beg that I may lay my head
Upon thy shoulder and be fed
With thoughts of brotherhood!"
So through the odorous wood,

More silently than friends new-found
We walked. At the first meadow-bound,
His figure ashen-stoled
Sank in the moon's broad gold.

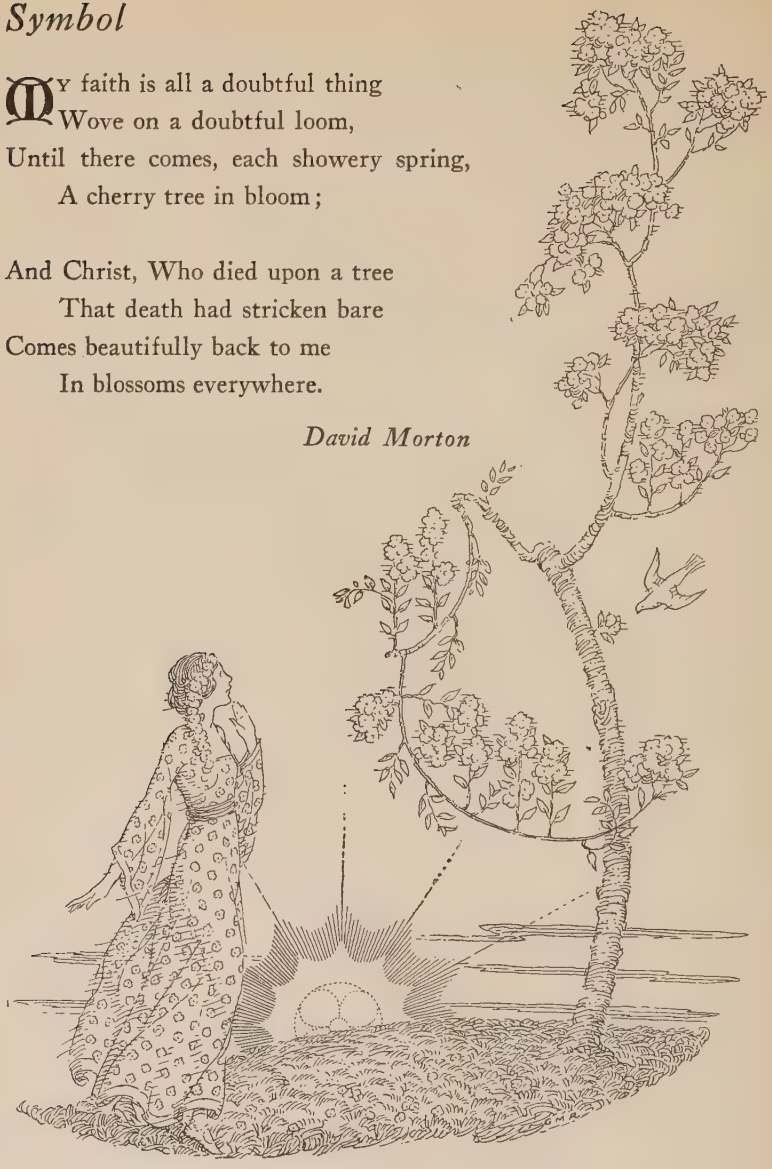
William Vaughn Moody

Symbol

My faith is all a doubtful thing
Wove on a doubtful loom,
Until there comes, each showery spring,
A cherry tree in bloom;

And Christ, Who died upon a tree
That death had stricken bare
Comes beautifully back to me
In blossoms everywhere.

David Morton



Corpus Christi

Come, dear Heart!
The fields are white to harvest: come and see
As in a glass the timeless mystery
Of love, whereby we feed
On God, our bread indeed.
Torn by the sickles, see him share the smart
Of travailing Creation: maimed, despised,
Yet by his lovers the more dearly prized
Because for us he lays his beauty down—
Last toll paid by Perfection for our loss!

Trace on these fields his everlasting Cross,
And o'er the stricken sheaves the Immortal Victim's crown.

From far horizons came a Voice that said,
'Lo! from the hand of Death take thou thy daily bread.'
Then I, awakening, saw
A splendour burning in the heart of things:
The flame of living love which lights the law
Of mystic death that works the mystic birth.
I knew the patient passion of the earth,
Maternal, everlasting, whence there springs
The Bread of Angels and the life of man.

Now in each blade
I, blind no longer, see
The glory of God's growth: know it to be
An earnest of the Immemorial Plan.
Yea, I have understood

How all things are one great oblation made:
He on our altars, we on the world's rood.
Even as this corn,
Earth-born,
We are snatched from the sod;
Reaped, ground to grist,
Crushed and tormented in the Mills of God,
And offered at Life's hands, a living Eucharist.

Evelyn Underhill

An Easter Hymn

(Easter in South Africa falls in Autumn)

His wide Hands fashioned us white grains and red,
His eyes weep rains to swell them in their bed,
Whereby the dust-grains of our lives are fed.
Alleluia!

In Earth our mother's bosom undecayed
The Seed-corn of the Flesh He took, He laid—
One white small Grain beneath a sealed rock's shade.
Alleluia!

How blind that Seed lay till this autumn morn
When forth it sprouted blade and flower and corn,
And with Its lifted Head the seal was torn!
Alleluia!

Hope of men's bodies' grains both red and white—
Shrivelled and sere and void of speech and sight,
Is that blind Seed Who burst His way to light.
Alleluia!

We, God's red millet grains, men hold so cheap,
Innumerable beneath our grey rocks sleep,
Yet He that cared to sow us cares to reap.
Alleluia!

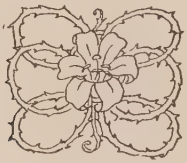
Arthur Shearly Cripps

To An April Bud

You little, eager, peeping thing—
You embryonic point of light
Pushing from out your winter night,
How you do make my pulses sing!
A tiny eye amid the gloom,
The merest speck I scarce had seen—
So doth God's rapture rend the tomb
In this wee burst of April green!

And lo, 'tis here—and lo! 'tis there—
Spurting its jets of sweet desire
In upward curling threads of fire
Like tapers kindling all the air.
Why, scarce it seems an hour ago
These branches clashed in bitter cold;
What Power hath set their veins aglow?
O soul of mine, be bold, be bold!
If from this tree, this blackened thing,
Hard as the floor my feet have prest
This flame of joy comes clamoring
In hues as red as robin's breast
Waking to life this little twig—
O faith of mine, be big! Be big!

Angela Morgan



The Source

I KNOW, whatever God may be,
All Life it was that lighted me
This little flame whereby I see.

I know All Strength did stir this hand
To serve somehow the poor command
Of whatsoe'er I understand.

And from All Love there throbs the stress
Of pity and of wistfulness
Both to be blessed and to bless.

O Light of Light, that still doth pour
On star and glow-worm known before,
I am alive for ever more.

Josephine Preston Peabody

Despised And Rejected

HOMELESS!
The Living Bread
Hungered
While all beside were fed.
To their warm holes the foxes ran,
Birds flew to nest when the west was red,
But the Son of Man
Had not where to lay His head.

Open Door
Henceforth for all
Hungers,
Hearth and Banquet Hall
For hurt and loneliness is he,
Thrust from Nazareth to roam
Vagabond of Galilee,
Who is every outcast's Home.

Katharine Lee Bates

Have I Been So Long Time With You?

HAVE I been so long time with you, and yet you do not know me
Whose feet you washed, whose bread you broke upon the eager hill,
Was I so unlike the Bridegroom who you said would come in glory
That you wait, and never wonder how my hand is on you still?

You bow the knee, you sip the wine, you breathe my name before me,
You say I called the dead to life, but slept upon a stone—
Have I been so long time with you, and yet you do not know me
Because I laughed and loved you and bade you walk alone?

If I had faith to meet with death and wrest all terror from him
To prove how far a man may walk who knows from whence he came,
Do you think the spear could slay my soul or that the tomb could hold me
Or that I would not come to those who call upon my name?

I bide my time, I keep my peace, I bind, I loose, I winnow,
I bear no wounds as witnesses in hands and feet and side;
I wear instead upon my brow the thorns of your complacence,
And through earth's generations my heart is crucified.

If you were brave, if you were kind, if you had faith sufficient,
If you believed the things you say, and died to make them true,
I should not need to come again returning and returning
Through all the lonely centuries and Golgothas for you.

Yet I am He whom seas obey, who takes the wings of morning,
Whose feet are on the mountain peaks, whose messenger a star—
Have I been so long time with you and yet you do not know me,
The living God who walks beside and loves you as you are?

Willard Wattles

The Teams are Waiting in the Field

THE teams are waiting in the field,
The plowmen all a-row,
As brisk and gay as birds in May,
They make a goodly show.

The farmer stands and sees all hands
Turn'd out and ready now;
Yet, ere they start, with all our heart
We'll say, God speed the plow!

We plow the field; but He must yield
His sunshine and his rains:
In hope we plow, in hope we sow,
That He may bless our pains.

'Tis even weight, and furrow straight,
That bears away the bell;
So off! and now God speed the plow,
And send the plowman well!

John Mason Neale

An Easter Canticle

IN every trembling bud and bloom
That cleaves the earth, a flowery sword,
I see Thee coming from out the tomb,
Thou risen Lord.

In every April wind that sings
Down lanes that make the heart rejoice,
Yea, in the word the wood-thrush brings,
I hear Thy voice.

Lo! every tulip is a cup
To hold thy morning's brimming wine;
Drink, O my soul, the wonder up—
Is it not Thine?

The great Lord God, invisible,
Hath roused to rapture the green grass;
Through sunlit mead and dew-drenched dell,
I see Him pass.

His old immortal glory wakes
The rushing streams and emerald hills;
His ancient trumpet softly shakes
The daffodils.

Thou art not dead! Thou art the whole
Of life that quickens in the sod;
Green April is Thy very soul,
Thou great Lord God!

Charles Hanson Towne

I Shall Arise!

You doubt. And yet, O you who walk your ways
Glad of your very breath!
Look back along the days:
Have you not tasted death?

What of the hour of anguish, over-past,
So fierce, so lone,
That even now the Soul looks back aghast
At sorrow of its own:
The pierced hands and stark,—
The eyes gone dark?
You who have known
And trodden down the fangs of such defeat,
Did you not feel some veil of flesh sore rent,—
Then, wonderment?
Did you not find it sweet
To live, still live,—to see, to breathe again,
Victorious over pain?
Did you not feel once more, as darkness went,
Upon your forehead, cold with mortal dew,
The daybreak new?
And far and new, some eastern breath of air
From that rapt Garden where
The lilies stood new-risen, fragranter
Than myrrh?

"Death, Death, was this thy sting—
This bitter thing?
Can it be past?
Only I know there was one agony,
One strait way to pass by,
A stress that could not last.
And in such conflict, something had to die---
It was not I."

Josephine Preston Peabody

Easter Wings

LORD, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more.
Till he became
Most poor:

With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

MY tender age in sorrow did beginne:
And still with sicknesses and shame
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.

With thee
Let me combine,
And feel this day thy victorie,
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

George Herbert

A Secret

COME, I will show you a thing beyond knowing,
This is the land where the Israelites fled;
No one has seen them to know of their going
Save an old man with a scar on his head.

Come, I will whisper a secret I'm keeping,
This is the land where Goliath was slain;
Down in the meadow a farmer boy sleeping
Found David's sling, and lost it again.

Come, I will sing you a song when I'm older
About a young man who was dead on a hill;
They shut up his body behind a big boulder
. . . I have a sign that he never lay still.

Willard Wattles

Corpus est de Deo

Lo—say the wise, say the very wise—
"Only the soul is of God" say they,
"She shall not perish or pass away—
But the flesh dies, but the fair flesh dies."
Corpus est de Deo.

This is the time, this is the sweet time,
How that Lord Christ was risen from death,
All we shall sing, all we that have breath,
In a glad rhyme, in a low glad rhyme;
Corpus est de Deo.

One Joseph said, and good Joseph said,
"That I might bear the body away
And the white body in sepulchre lay,
And the heavy head, the heavy head!"
Corpus est de Deo.

And to His place, to His secret place
Lo—one was carried sick with sleep,
With huddling steps when the night was deep,
With slow pace, and with slow pace.
Corpus est de Deo.

With myrrh and spice, with fresh myrrh and spice,
And linen white, the white body they bound;
This saw from a more removèd ground
Mary's eyes and the Magdalene's eyes.
Corpus est de Deo.

With spices sweet, with fresh spices sweet,
In tomb they laid the body away,
"O piteous Lord, Master!"—cried they,
And "the wounded feet, O the wounded feet!"
Corpus est de Deo.

With their own hands, with their own sad hands
They closed the door with a massy stone,
There none remained but the watch alone,
—On His wrist, bands, on His feet, grave-bands,—
Corpus est de Deo.

Still was around, deep still was around,
There was none wept with a covered face,
There was none mourning about the place
With a low sound, with a sad, low sound.
Corpus est de Deo.

Master arise, good Master arise!
Nay, for a little a sleep is sweet.
Desire there was not in His feet,
And in His eyes no light for His eyes.
Corpus est de Deo.

With sound of might, with sound of great might,
The white grave-clothes were rent in sunder,
With a terribleness and wonder,
And a great light and fire of light!
Corpus est de Deo.

Be you all glad, be you now all glad,
Be glad in your soul for your great gladness!
His spirit sprang from the night and sadness,
And was not sad,—lo—and was not sad!
Corpus est de Deo.

Put by vain shame, put by your vain shame,
Loosen your hair, and your lips with song!
Out of the darkness that is most strong
His body came, His fair body came.
Corpus est de Deo.

Lo—say the wise, say the very wise,
"Soul is of God, the body a vain thing."
Dance with your feet, let your mouth sing!
Lift up your eyes, lift up your sad eyes!
Corpus est de Deo.

In every place say they, in each place,
"Soul is of God, the body of shame"—
Out of the dust His sweet body came
And blood to His face, to His sweet face.
Corpus est de Deo.

O wondrous thing! O most blessèd thing!
Body and soul of one great birth—
All ye that are of dust and earth
Lift up and sing, lift ye up and sing,
"Corpus est de Deo!" *John Hall Wheelock*

A Child's Easter Song

THE world has come awake
And will be lovely soon
With warm sunlight at noon
And ripples in the lake,

Now soon the ground will flower
And scarlet tulips grow
Down borders in a row
All opened in an hour;

For where the earth was brown
The pointed leaves of green
Reach out, and there are seen
Red flowers folded down:

The snows have gone away
And all the little birds
Sing songs that need no words,
For this is Easter Day.

Margaret Widdemer

The Easter Children

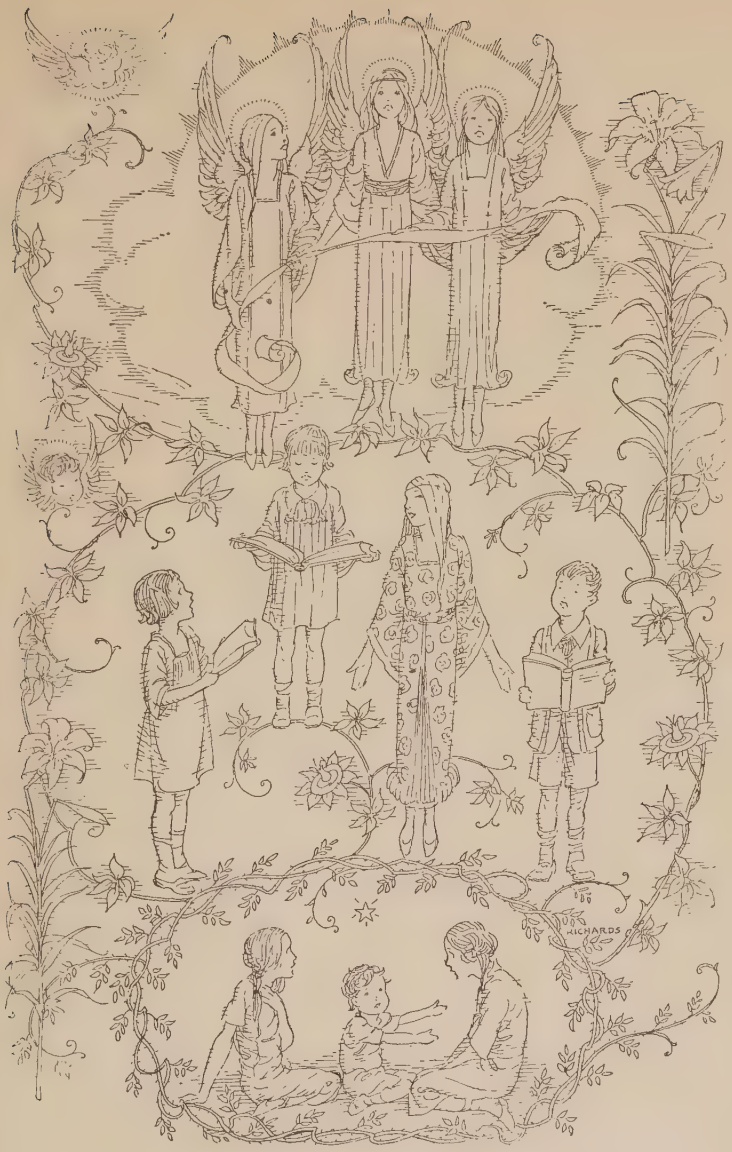
"CHRIST the Lord is risen!"
Chant the Easter children,
Their love-moulded faces
Luminous with gladness,
And their costly raiment
Gleaming like the lilies.

But last night I wandered
Where Christ had not risen,
Where love knows no gladness,
Where the Lord of Hunger
Leaves no room for lilies
And no time for childhood.

And to-day I wonder
Whether I am dreaming;
For above the swelling
Of their Easter music
I can hear the murmur
"Suffer *all* the children."

Nay, the world is dreaming!
And my seeing spirit
Trembles for its waking,
When their Savior rises
To restore the lilies
To the outcast children.

Elsa Barke


RICHARDS

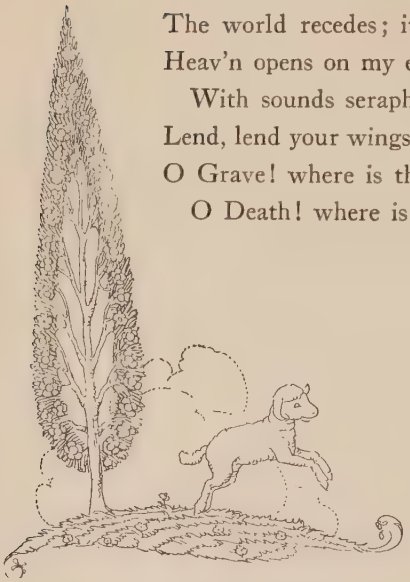
The Dying Christian to his Soul

VITAL spark of heav'nly flame!
Quit, O quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

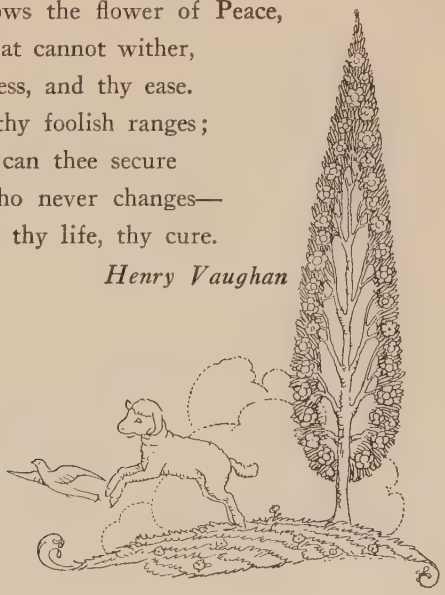
Alexander Pope



Peace

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
All skilful in the wars:
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crown'd with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious Friend,
And—O my soul, awake!—
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure
But One who never changes—
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

Henry Vaughan



The Living Chalice

THE Mother sent me on the holy quest
Timid and proud and curiously dressed
In vestures by her hand wrought wondrously;
An eager burning heart she gave to me.
The Bridegroom's Feast was set and I drew nigh—
Master of Life, Thy Cup has passed me by.

Before new-dressed I from the Mother came,
In dreams I saw the wondrous Cup of Flame;
Ah, Divine Chalice, how my heart drank deep,
Waking I sought the Love I knew asleep.
The Feast of Life was set and I drew nigh—
Master of Life, Thy Cup has passed me by.

Eyes of the Soul, awake, awake and see
Growing within the Ruby Radiant Tree,
Sharp pain hath wrung the Clusters of my Vine;
My heart is rose-red with its brimmed wine.
Thou hast new-set the Feast and I draw nigh—
Master of Life take me, Thy Cup am I.

Susan Mitchell

Paradise

PARADISE is (as from the Learn'd I gather)
A quire of blest Soules circling in the Father.

Robert Herrick

RICHARDS

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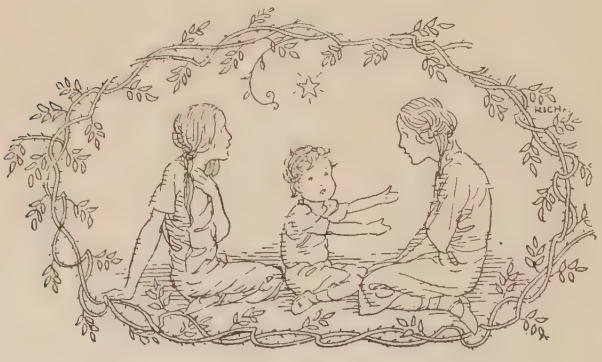

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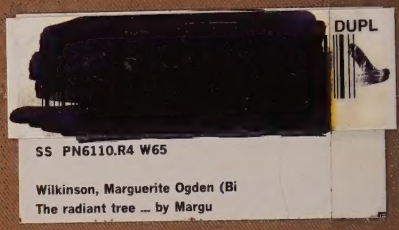
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